

Friday December 6 1996

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Australia A 1.50	Canada C 1.50	France F 1.50
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France F 1.50	USA US 2.75	
Germany G 1.50		
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The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 48,728

Major's disastrous day

'Shabby and mean-minded'

Huge Tory revolt over pensions cut

By David Brindle

JOHNSON Major faced a huge revolt by Tory backbenchers last night over his handling of plans for 550 million cuts in war pensions, branded "shabby and mean-minded" in a wounding Commons attack by the Labour leader, Tony Blair.

Conservatives and Ulster Unionists are threatening to join forces to make the Government back down on the plans, disclosed yesterday by the Guardian after they were disguised in the Budget as simplification of procedures.

In the noisiest and most bitter exchanges in the Commons since the summer, Mr Major came off a poor second to Mr Blair in a series of exchanges on exposure of the real plans and the acknowledged £1 million "sweeteners" added to appease ex-service groups.

Mr Major said the most contentious issue, the proposed block on any future claims for an increase in war pensions for hearing loss, affecting 10,000 war veterans a year, was based on the Government by independent medical advice.

This was echoed in a letter sent to Tory MPs last night by Lord Mackay of Ardvrecknish, the Social Security Minister, in an attempt to stem a rising tide of backbench anger. Although it had been thought that veterans could suffer war-related hearing loss long after leaving the services, he said, "recent medical advice has found that that does not exist".

Baroness Williams of Trafford said on BBC radio that this advice appeared unanimous and had emerged from a special government study, but from "a long process of investigation and books being published and texts in medical journals and so on".

He maintained: "I asked if there were any medicals who have a counter view and I was told there were none."

Several leading medical experts voiced surprise at this assertion. Jonathan Hasall, head of the medical research unit at the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, said there was clear evidence to the contrary.

The Prime Minister confirmed the changes, but insisted that no existing pensioner would lose out. He accused the Guardian of being misleading and simplistic.

Tory backbenchers were almost unanimous last night in expressing dismay that a Tory government should attempt to squeeze war pensioners. Some privately criticised Mr Major's performance in the Commons. One accused



him of bluster, another said he appeared badly briefed.

Although the proposed cuts could be enacted through regulations, officials have advised ministers that the most contentious one, on deafness pensions, would need legislation to be "watertight".

The Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, said: "We are very anxious to ensure that war pensioners are treated properly. We are gravely disturbed by what we have learned."

Winston Churchill, Tory MP for Daventry, called for the resignation of William Waldegrave, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, who appears to have forced through the cut on deafness pensions against the opposition of all social security ministers.

Ridiculing ministers' attempts to attribute the cut to medical opinion, Mr Churchill said: "I have never heard such nonsense in my life. Any grown-up government takes responsibility for their own actions and doesn't try to go and hide behind professional advice."

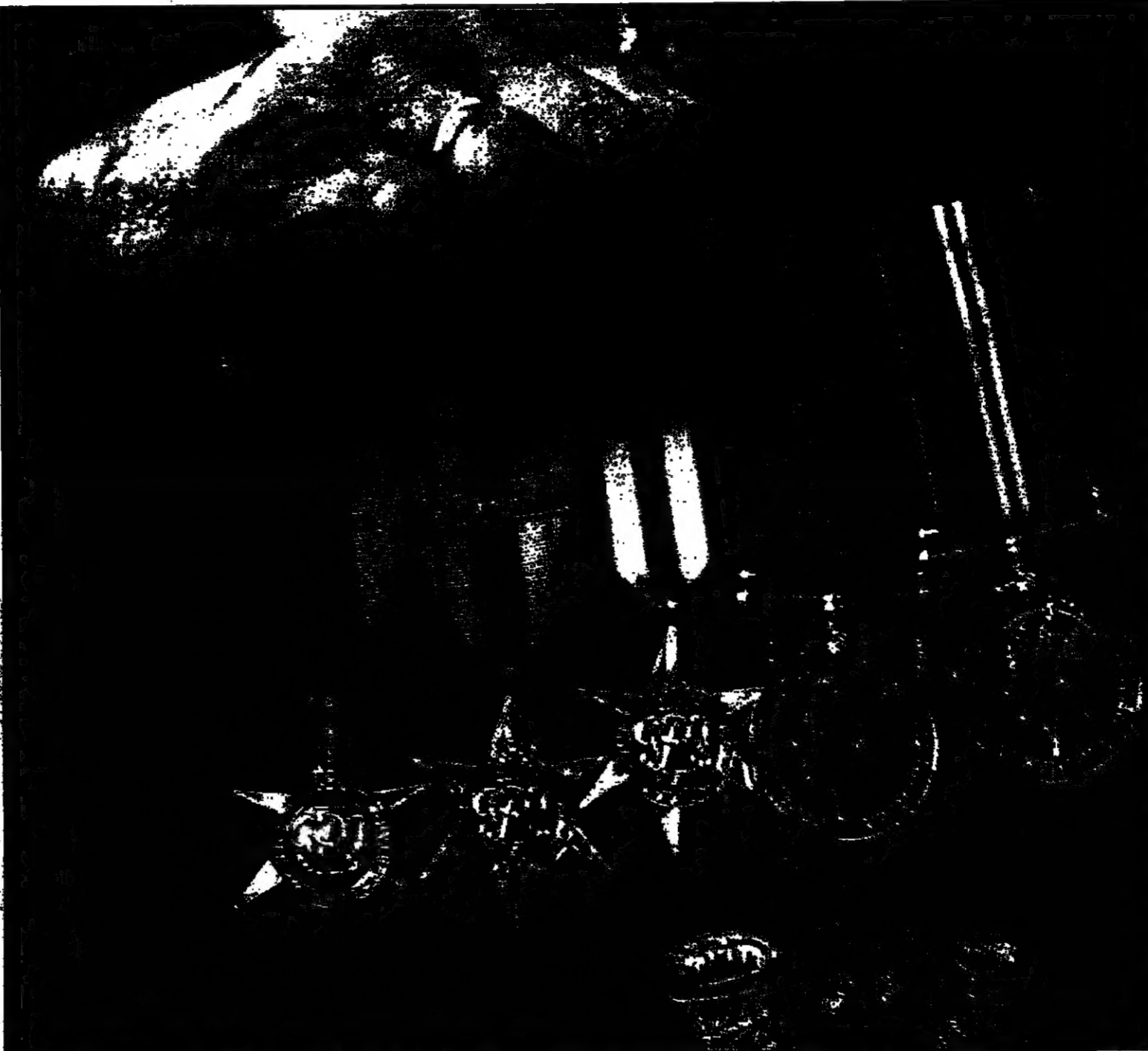
Downing Street later claimed Mr Churchill's views had changed after being briefed by officials and speaking to Mr Waldegrave.

Mr Blair set out for Mr Major a series of specific questions about the Guardian's disclosures and defied him to answer them. The Prime Minister declined.

Leading Liberal Democrat Alan Beith asked Mr Major: "Since it is only a few weeks since we saw disabled war pensioners determined to march, limp or be pushed in wheelchairs past the Cenotaph, surely you haven't forgotten them now?"

Ex-service groups were holding their fire after talking to Lord Mackay at the Central Advisory Committee meeting yesterday. Other groups were outspoken, however. The charity Help the Aged said the cuts showed "total disregard and disrespect" for war veterans.

Scottish, page 2; Letters, page 5; Is this what he died for?, page 5



Let's they forget... Help the Aged said the proposed war pension cuts showed "total disregard and disrespect" for veterans PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEAVER

Clarke scuppers euro plot

Splits on single currency widen

By Michael White

CABINET unity over Europe was again in shreds last night after the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, virtually accused the Conservative Party chairman, Brian Mawhinney, of organising a plot to bounce John Major into reneging on their compromise over the European single currency.

Uproar at last night's weekly meeting of the backbench 1922 Committee saw Tory rightwingers asking: "Who's in charge of the Government - Clarke or Major?" while loyalists desperately tried to get their colleagues to stop rocking the boat.

A week before the EU's Dublin summit, the timing is grim. Publication of draft EU treaty provisions - first reported in the Guardian - governing sensitive issues such as border controls and

economic policy will raise rightwing pressure in next week's two-day Commons debate.

Barley 48 hours after Mr Major thought he had pushed the Tory Euro-genie back into its bottle, the Chancellor was forced to issue a statement denying that he had threatened to resign if the party's election manifesto rules out a single currency in the 1997-2002 parliament.

Conservative HQ later joined Mr Clarke in a comprehensive, if unconvincing, denial of media "mischiefs-making". But the Chancellor initially failed to disown reported remarks to friends at Westminster that he had accused Dr Mawhinney's staff of briefing against him.

He is reputed to have told

Dr Mawhinney: "Tell your kids to get their scooters off my lawn," a dismissive invocation of Harold Wilson's "banks-of-ruby-lawn" warning to a union leader in the 1960s.

Without directly accusing Mr Major of being responsible for a leak to Monday's Daily Telegraph, the Chancellor was reported by the BBC as saying "it was a boomerang laden with high explosives which has blown up in the Prime Minister's face, damaging him badly" - a convincingly Clarke-like metaphor that also went unmentioned.

With Labour gleefully stirring the row, few Tory MPs doubted that Mr Major's authority has been weakened. One ex-minister called it "his turn to page 2, column 8

Skipper has screw loose as wheels come off England cricketers' wagon yet again

By David Hopps in Harare

AFTER England's cricket team had contrived to lose to Mashonaland yesterday, a rumour that Michael Atherton might have a screw loose came as no surprise. Anyone prepared to captain a side so skilled at self-humiliation is bound to have his sanity brought into question.

It turned out that the screw was not in Atherton's head but in his back. The result of an operation earlier in his career that has left him in persistent discomfort. While he underwent an X-ray in a Harare hospital, at least he was spared some of the more gruesome aspects of England's eight-wicket defeat. Atherton's repeated insistence that he was fine owed

everything to his refusal to make excuses and nothing to logic. He has been in considerable pain, a virus having reduced the effectiveness of the painkillers he takes regularly. No one could carry England's bat for so long without buckling under the strain.

Mashonaland, who won England's opening four-day match of the tour with a day to spare, fielded five of Zimbabwe's nine full-time professionals and received the princely sum of £4150 (about \$9), plus as many bottles of Castle lager as they could drink, for inflicting England's latest embarrassment. Zimbabwe plan to extend the trend in a two-Test series this month.

Among England's tormentors with the ball was the rookie Sussex fast bowler James Kirtley, who had been thrilled just to bowl at England in the nets. Last Sunday, England collapsed to defeat against a President's XI after running foul of an old adversary - Eddo Brandes, a slimmed-down chicken farmer who has not played much of late because his birds have flu. Atherton's flock looks equally sickly.

Five of the worst

1. **1995's Worst Movie** - *Waterworld*

2. **1995's Worst TV Show** - *Baywatch*

3. **1995's Worst Album** - *...And the Winner Takes It All* by Roxette

4. **1995's Worst Director** - *Waterworld* by James Cameron

5. **1995's Worst Actor** - *Waterworld* by Kevin Costner

Britain World News Finance Sport

Obituaries 10
Comment and Letters 8
Friday Review
Quick Crossword 15
TV and Radio 16

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Sketch

O level playing field trips up PM



Simon Hoggart

JOHN MAJOR was thoroughly skewered yesterday, turning gently by the fire like a seasoned infested doner kebab...

(Will Mr Blair's aides, the Praetorians of the New Bureaucracy, be grateful for this paper's help? Don't be silly.)

It was an exciting day. Just after Messrs Major and Blair walked in, Mr David Evans (C, Weymouth) was in the middle of a rant about tagging criminals...

The level of sophisticated argument soon fell. Alan Beith (Lib Dem, Berwick) was the first to ask about the war pensions...

Mr Major said he had been misled by the CBI. No one would lose money as a result of the changes.

Then a curious incident occurred. You may recall that two psychologists have offered the Labour Party a psychological profile of the Prime Minister...

Review

Doggfather part two: the return

Garth Cartwright

Soul Jam Wembley Arena

WHEN Snoop Doggy Doggy stroled on to Wembley's stage to a collective roar he must have felt like Evander Holyfield after taking Mike Tyson's title...

Now cleared of the murder charge and with his new album, The Doggfather, sitting at No. 1 in Billboard's US album chart...

With his processed hair, long fingernails and gold jewellery, Snoop models pimp fashions straight out of Stansky and Hutch...

Snoop is undeniably charismatic, a rhyming Mephisto, and his appeal, both sexy and sleazy, had female fans screaming to join him on the stage...

Girls behaving badly are back as C4 heads for 24-hour broadcasts

Andrew Cuff Media Correspondent

CHANNEL 4 yesterday signalled its determination to continue courting controversy by announcing the return of The Girls Show...

The first series was condemned by MPs and repudiated by the Broadcasting Standards Council, but Channel 4 said it would return "lighter and sharper, but still determined to behave very badly indeed".

Teachers accuse Shephard of trying to turn back clock with new guidelines favouring the three Rs

Tougher exams ordered

Donald MacLeod Education Correspondent

GILLIAN Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, yesterday ordered measures to make A level and GCSE examinations more traditional...

Her attempt to end the annual argument about whether exams are getting easier was frustrated by a lack of answer papers going back to 1975 on which to base firm conclusions...

All-party shame over gifts

Sleaze mires Ireland's top politicians

David Shearrock Ireland Correspondent

IMAGINE if Marks & Spencer had been discovered paying for the building of an extension to the home of the Transport Secretary, Sir George Young...

The story began at the weekend when the Irish transport minister, Michael Lowry, resigned in order to clear his name over allegations made in a confidential financial report...

It is expected that the Price Waterhouse report into Dunnes Stores, described as "political dynamite" by senior politicians in Dublin, may be published soon...

Yesterday the prime minister, John Bruton, disclosed that his Fine Gael party—the largest of the three-party coalition government—had sought cash from Ben Dunne, former head of the stores chain...

But the glee on the opposition benches of the Dail quickly came to an end when the gossips alleged that a former Fianna Fail minister had received more than £1 million...

Blackstreet may not mean much here but in the US they became national heroes when their single Hot Diggity ended the 13-week reign of Los Del Rio's Macarena...

Blackstreet are a raucous blend of harmonising and pure hip-hop thump. Riley and his three groupmates sweat, shimmy and encourage as much audience participation as possible...

This review appeared in later editions yesterday.

Colourful firm, colourful lives

DUNNES Stores, with its "St Bernard" label, may be the Marks & Spencer of Ireland, but its British counterpart is nowhere near as colourful...

The chain was established by Ben Dunne in Cork in 1945 after his father dissuaded him from emigrating to the United States...

Twelve years later, he went off on a golfing holiday to Florida. Off the fairways, he went on a tycoon-style binge worthy of an American soap...

The incident brought to a head a simmering family row that led to a lengthy legal battle for control of the company.

inforced calls for more emphasis on basic writing and numeracy skills. The form and content of exams had changed over time but the demands on students appeared broadly the same.

"I am determined to ensure that standards are not allowed to slip in the future because the efforts of our young people must not be wasted. One of the most worrying features of this report is that it provides further evidence of inconsistencies between syllabuses and between examining boards..."

Teachers accused the government of trying to turn the clock back and examination boards insisted today's students were required to deal with more sophisticated analysis in answering questions

Main points

- Fewer A level and GCSE syllabuses to choose from. Merge exam boards — but not a single national board. More pre-1900 literature in A level English. Less use of calculators and books in exams. National archive of exam scripts. More emphasis on spelling and grammar at GCSE. Separate English language GCSE from 1998.

compared with past exams geared to feats of memory. New guidance from the authority will further tighten supervision of the four examining boards in England...

English GCSE papers is expected to be followed by a separate English language GCSE. At A level, students will be required to read more classical texts than the present minimum of two pre-1900 texts. In maths the use of cal-

culators is to be restricted and formula sheets reviewed. Mrs Shephard said she expected the number of syllabuses to be cut significantly — at present there are nearly 250 A level and AS syllabuses in English, maths and science — and stepped up pressure on the boards to merge with each other and the vocational awarding bodies...

John Dunford, former president of the Secondary Heads' Association and head of Johnston School in Durham, appealed to Mrs Shephard not to turn the clock back 20 years. "Let us make sure exams reflect the curriculum of the modern day and not some pre-text curriculum of 20 years ago."

Chancellor scuppers Tory plot on Europe

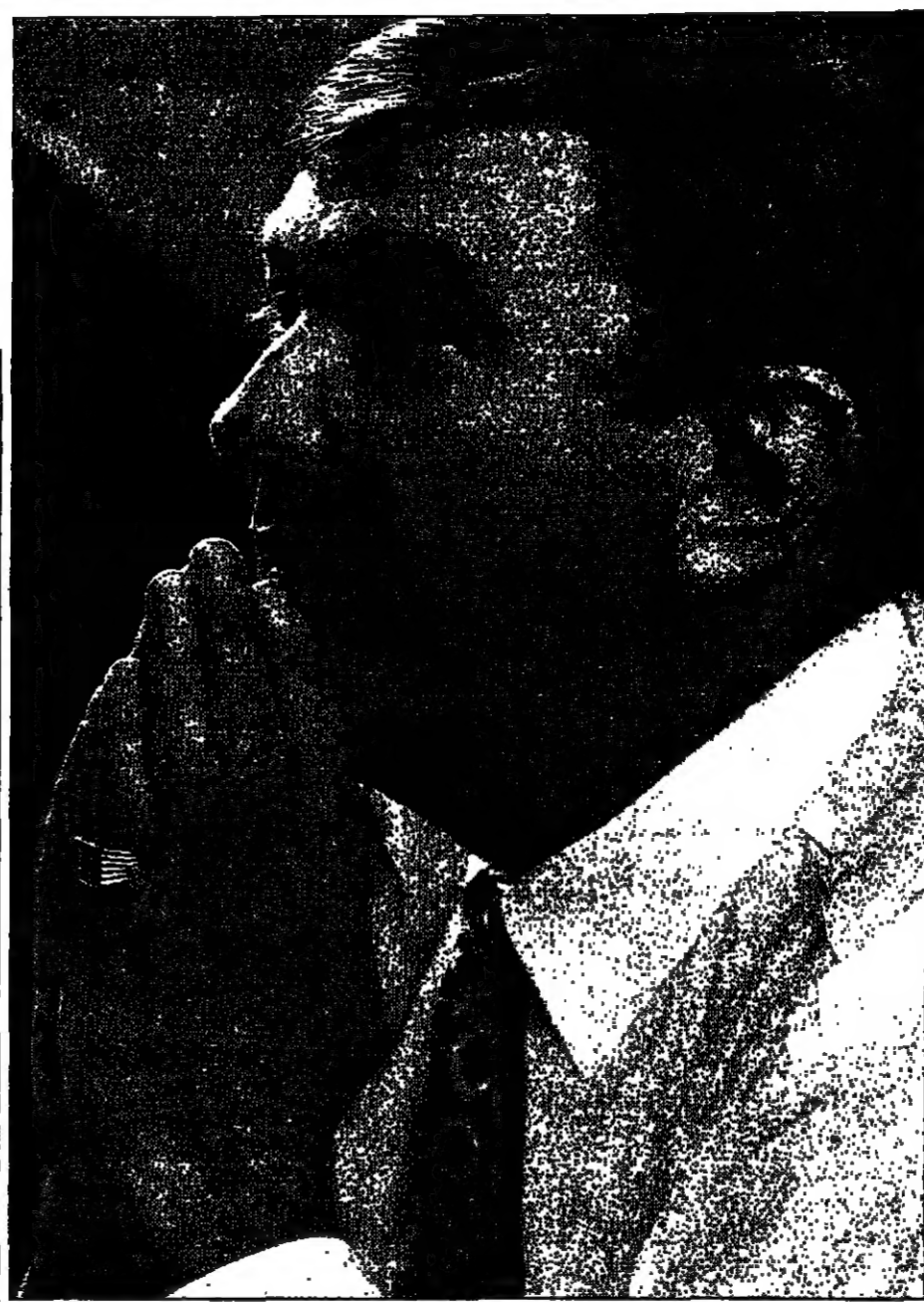
continued from page 1 worst week since Redwood's leadership challenge". Another said: "He looks like a boxer on the ropes."

On Channel 4 News, the Eurosceptic MP Teresa Gorman said: "It looks as if Ken Clarke and Michael Heseltine stitched John Major up on Tuesday" — a reference to the trio's public statements reaffirming last April's compromise, whereby a Tory government would keep its options open, at least in theory, on whether to join the euro before 2002.

Not all sceptics agree. Whether Monday's clumsy attempt to reopen the compromise debate was launched in the Telegraph without the Prime Minister's knowledge — some MPs said it stemmed from a lunch between Mr Major and the newspaper's editor, Charles Moore — it has achieved the opposite effect. Mr Clarke has his "copper-bottomed" agreement to uphold the earlier formula in writing. He is said to carry it round in his briefcase.

Some Tory MPs believe Mr Clarke should resign for sharing with BBC journalists his irritation over a West End lunch — the source of yesterday's "scotter" remarks, according to Labour's Frank Dobson, who was at a nearby table.

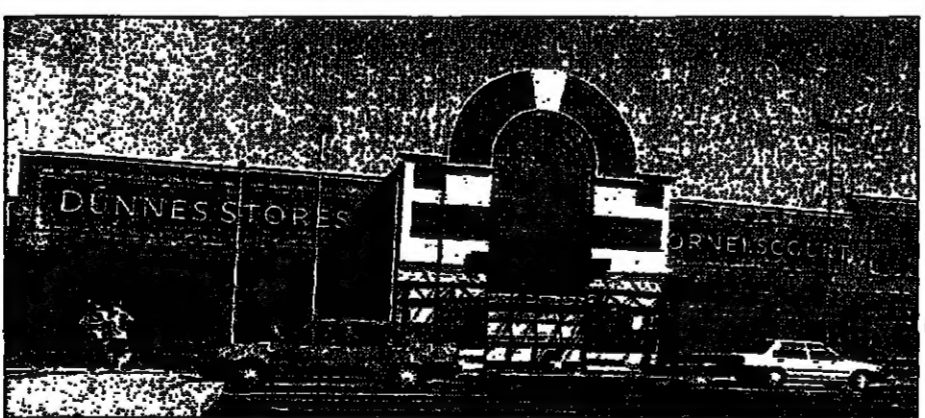
Today's Telegraph/Gallup poll, which gives Labour a startling post-Budget lead, up 10 points to 37 — 59 per cent for Labour, 22 Tories and 12 Liberal Democrats — will enhance the Prime Minister's position. Tony Blair, the Labour leader, said last night that the row showed the Government was now "descending into disorganised shambles. They are not only incapable of being led but incapable of governing the country."



Ben Dunne, who went on a Florida binge that led to the legal battle exposing the cash scandal

there is no conclusive proof," the source told the newspaper.

The scandal seems set to spread to include the names of hosts of town, city and county councillors throughout the Irish Republic.



Dunnes Stores, at the centre of reports about cash gifts which are rocking Irish politics

Colourful firm, colourful lives

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days after he was kidnapped by the IRA. He was later released amid reports of a substantial ransom payment. He has refused to talk about the ordeal.

The incident brought to a head a simmering family row that led to a lengthy legal battle for control of the company.

Margaret Heffernan, whose salary in 1992 was £1.5m

The Price Waterhouse report at the centre of the present row was commissioned as part of Mrs Heffernan's case. The matter was settled out of court in 1994. Mr Dunne now has his own retail company.

Advertisement for 'She's not a bird, Rodney. She's an actress' video. Includes text: 'ONLY FOOLS and HORSES', 'Is love on the cards for Del Boy? Find out in this feature length xmas special £12.99 OUT NOW ON VIDEO', 'FIRST TIME EVER ON VIDEO', and the BBC logo.

صكرا من الالهل

Bookies bet on daily lottery

Dominic Walsh and Jonathan Corino

CHARITIES could lose more than £200 million a year as a result of a daily draw to be launched before Christmas by Britain's biggest bookmakers in a direct challenge to the National Lottery.

The televised lottery, to be called Forty Nines, is a joint venture between Coral, William Hill and Ladbrokes, which are introducing the draw on December 16 as a direct response to the Government's continued refusal to allow betting on winning National Lottery numbers.

It is expected to start as a daily draw, but industry analysts believe it could be increased to twice a day, depending on public reaction.

A spokesman for Camelot, the National Lottery operator, said: "We are aware of the move and are considering our position."

It is thought to be looking at the possibility of a legal challenge on the grounds that the new lottery may break the 1967 Gaming Act.

The Irish lottery has lost a fifth of its revenue since the introduction of betting in bookies' shops. Experts feel the UK lottery could suffer a similar drop. This would equate to the loss of £1 billion in revenues and £260 million in pay-outs to good causes.

In common with the National Lottery, Forty Nines will be based on a machine that spews out six balls numbered between one and 49. There are no plans to offer a multi-million-pound jackpot, which would be too costly to hedge against. But the odds it is offering are likely to make it a serious rival to Camelot.

A £1 bet on five correct numbers would win a punter £100,000, compared with about £1,500 in the National Lottery. Three correct numbers would result in a £311 payout, whereas the Saturday draw pays out £10.

The game will be shown live on SIS, the satellite television system that relays races to most of the country's 8,500 betting shops.

In addition to William Hill, Ladbrokes and Coral — who between them are paying £400,000 in start-up costs — other leading operators, including Stanley Racing, are expected to participate, paying £5 a shop to receive the televised coverage.



Breaking up is hard to do... Percy Adams sits proudly in front of his Northlew Silver Band colleagues before the split. Mr Adams objected to 'new-fangled pop stuff' by artists such as The Beatles and Abba

Last march of Colonel Bogey

Percy Adams has paid the price as sounds from the 1960s oust music for the over-60s. Stuart Millar on a coup amid the cornets

Brassed off

Top five brass band tunes

Percy Adams	The Young Turks
1: Colonel Bogey	1: All You Need is Love, The Beatles
2: Onward Christian Soldiers	2: Let's Be The Beatles
3: Jerusalem	3: YMCA, Village People
4: An Old Fiddler's Cross	4: Eyes of the Tiger, Survivor
5: How Great Thou Art	5: Paper Moon, Abba

COLONEL Bogey was a staple of Northlew Silver Band's concert repertoire for more than 40 years. But the north Devon church concert and summer fete circuit will never be the same after a coup by young members ousted the definitive military march and the village band's veteran conductor in the name of progress.

In a classic example of "artistic differences", rebels told Percy Adams, aged 78, he would have to go because his old-fashioned tastes were putting off new recruits and forcing the band into stagnation. Mr Adams, a farmer and grandfather, had devoted his entire life to the band since joining in 1932. He rose through the ranks playing cornet, tenor horn and trombone before taking over as bandmaster in 1971. Since then he has chosen every tune the 20-piece band played.

The dispute came to a head at a meeting to plan

the Christmas concert in the village hall, the most glittering date in the band's calendar. The youngsters demanded that they be allowed to play dangerous modern music such as The Beatles and Village People, but Mr Adams insisted they stick to military marches and rousing hymns. They responded by offering to draw up his resignation letter.

Yesterday, Mr Adams announced he would boycott the concert. "I am upset and disappointed at the way they have done it," he said. "I'm not young and if they waited I could not have gone on for much longer. When they asked me to resign it came as a shock... I think one or two of them wanted my job and that is why they kicked me out."

He said he preferred "proper" old brass band music. "There are no tunes in the stuff they wanted to play. I don't remember much of what they asked for, but there was stuff from The Beatles and a pop

song called YMCA. It was all the new-fangled pop stuff they wanted."

Mr Adams denied he had been too dogmatic in his musical preferences. "We did play some modern pieces. We did one called Love Changes Everything or something like that."

None of the rebels could be contacted yesterday, but the band's chairman expressed regret at the outcome. "Some members wanted to play modern up-tempo music and Mr Adams did not, which is understandable for someone of his age, but he was stopping the rest of the band from doing so."

He said they had tried to reach a compromise that would allow the band to play up-to-date pieces while Mr Adams would continue to conduct the older ones. "In the end there seemed to be no compromise available and he was asked to resign. No one wants to chuck out someone who has served the band for 64 years and we have much regret what has happened."



Let it be... Percy Adams yesterday after being forced out of the band he had served for 64 years. PHOTOGRAPH: MARG HILL

Vatican talks stall over women

Pope and archbishop agree to rethink road to reunification

John Hooper in Rome

THE Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury announced last night that their two Churches were to rethink their talks on reunification because of the "obstacle to reconciliation caused by the ordination of women".

In a rare joint declaration, they said: "In view of women's ordination, it may be opportune at this stage in our journey to consult further about how the relationship between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church is to progress."

Both sides insisted they remained committed to talks, and the atmosphere surrounding Archbishop Carey's first official visit to the Vatican was one of cordiality. But

the decision with which it ended is bound to be seen as ominous by ecumenically minded Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

At a press conference later the archbishop made a series of contradictory remarks about women's ordination which seemed to reflect the strains of the visit. "It could be that the ordination of women will not be received into the life of the Church. Anything can happen in the years to come," he said.

But asked whether that meant the Synod's agreement on women's ordination could be reversed, he said no. He added that women priests were going from "strength to strength".

The Pope, by contrast, was unyielding. Twice in the day, his steely message to Angli-

cans was that — if only they would think long enough and pray hard enough — they would realise he was right and accept his authority.

After just 30 minutes of private discussion with Dr Carey, he said: "My particular responsibility as the Successor of Peter for the faith and unity of the Church leads me to invite my brothers and sisters of the Anglican Communion to reflect on the motives and reasons of the positions I have expressed in the exercise of my teaching office."

Earlier, his guest had swept into the Vatican in a black limousine, and been ushered into the sumptuous Apostolic Palace which serves as the Pope's residence and office.

Their discussions had been billed as strictly private. But, with an unfortunate turn of phrase, Dr Carey described it as being "as alone as you ever want to be".

Sitting alongside Dr Carey in the Vatican library after-

wards, his hand trembling violently as he read from a prepared text, Pope John Paul made clear the depths of the Vatican's disillusion.

He said the split with Canterbury in the 16th century had been "tragic". Since the start of their talks, Anglicans and Roman Catholics had "joined more fervently in prayer for the gift of unity". The dialogue had "highlighted points of convergence and even agreement not thought possible before".

But he went on to imply that, because of the difficulties over women's ordination, reunification was no longer a realistic aim.

Dr Carey and his wife were unexpectedly asked back for lunch, along with the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, Njongonkulu Ndungane. But there was no invitation to the celebrations the Vatican is planning in Rome to mark the start of the third Christian millennium.

John Vassall, once Britain's most notorious spy, dies a secret death

Richard Norton-Taylor

THIRTY years ago, his name was all over the front pages. Last month he dropped dead on a London bus and no one noticed. It emerged yesterday that John Vassall, the former Admiralty clerk at the centre of a spy scandal that rocked the Macmillan government and severely embarrassed the security services, had been privately buried.

Vassall, a homosexual blackmailed by the KGB, changed his name to John Phillips, protected by obscurity. He was usually described as a lonely figure. Yet

more than 100 people attended his Latin High Mass funeral secret at the St Martin Oratory in Knightsbridge, west London, on Tuesday. That, too, emerged only yesterday.

The congregation, which heard a passage from The Ballad of Reading Jail by Oscar Wilde, included friends from the British Records Association, where he worked as an archivist. Also there was Lord Longford, who met Vassall in prison after he was sentenced to 18 years in 1962.

"I saw him quite often. I was impressed by him," Lord Longford said yesterday. He described the funeral as a "pretty good tribute".

Vassall died of a heart attack at the age of 72 outside Baker Street Underground station on November 18, almost entirely forgotten by a public which had vilified him, despite the underlying questions about why someone who had scarcely hidden his homosexuality, and had indulged in a lifestyle well beyond his official means, had not been suspected sooner.

His arrest and trial provoked a furore at a time when political scandal was more about sex and spies than sex and sieges. The Vassall case was a kind of prelude to the Profumo affair.



John Vassall: vilified, then forgotten, by the public

Ironically, Pynchon's refusal to assume a public persona has only fuelled an image he may have never intended. "It works for him that he is a recluse," says Chris Calhoun. "I'm sure this is a coincidence, but it's very big business."

Nancy Jo Sales on the world's most notorious literary recluse

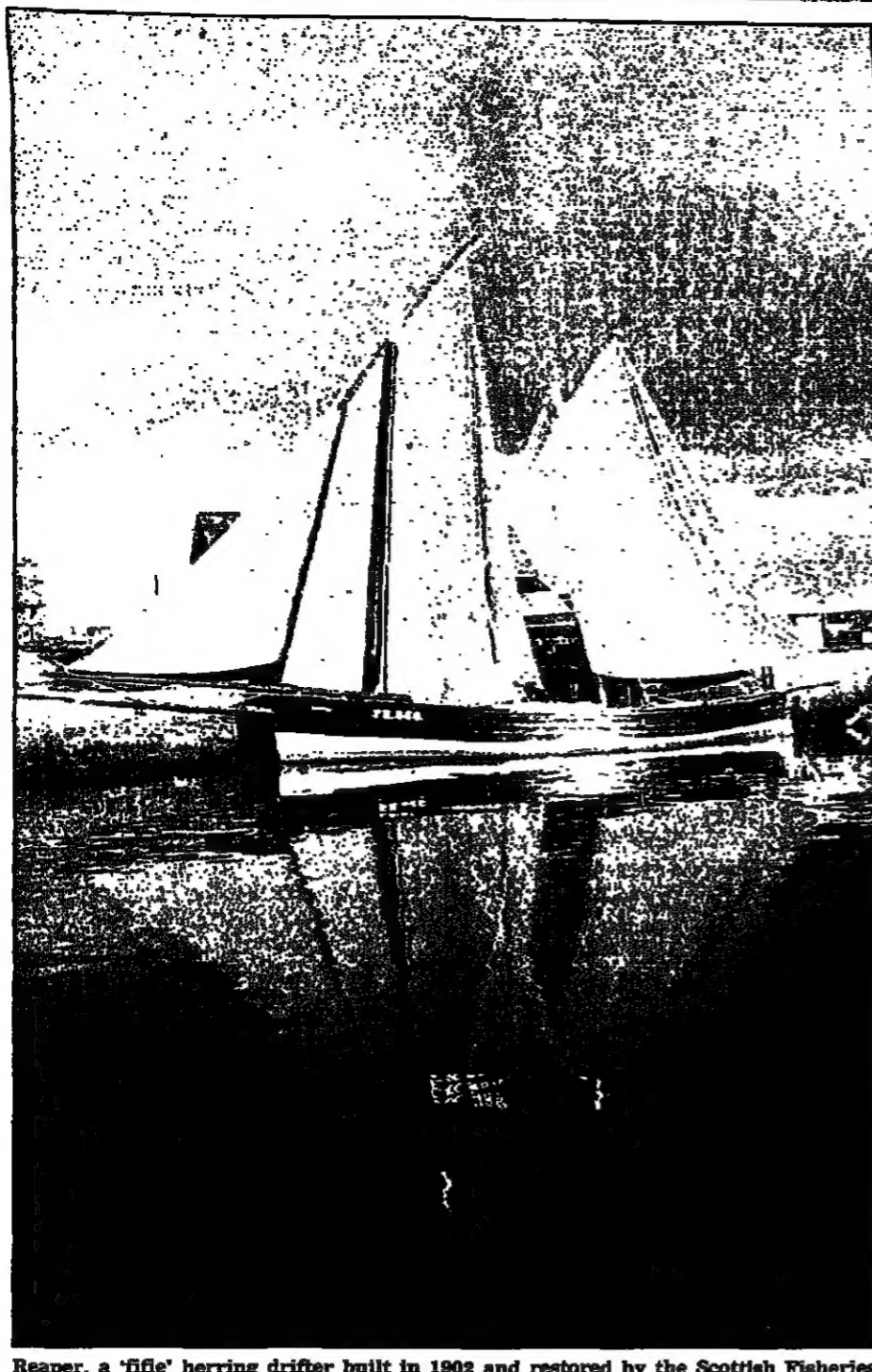
Friday Review cover story

SUCCESS.
IT'S A
MIND
GAME.

GOLDSMITHS & WALKER & HALL

John Vassall

Cash cuts could sink marine relics



Reaper, a 'fife' herring drifter built in 1902 and restored by the Scottish Fisheries Museum at Anstruther, Fife, will be among the 3,000 historic ships on the register

Maev Kennedy looks at proposal for a national register of pre-1945 vessels

Listing of historic ships may see many left high and dry

Many of the 3,000 or more historic ships being conserved around Britain, from Elizabethan galleons to 20th century gunships, are likely to face stormy times after the announcement yesterday of an attempt to compile a national ships register.

Wrecks and restoration

THE Mary Rose, Henry VIII's favourite warship, was built about 1520, and sank off Portsmouth in 1545. It was raised in 1982 and is undergoing a £1.25 million restoration.

Recently the historic ships collection at Exeter docks went into receivership, hit by lease problems, maintenance costs and a decline in visitors.

Smoke incident forces tunnel safety review

Keith Harper Transport Editor

EUROTUNNEL has been forced to amend its emergency procedures after an incident in which a 15-mile stretch of the Channel Tunnel's service tunnel filled with dense exhaust smoke when the engine of a service vehicle developed a fault.

Copyright detectives prepare to move in on Whitehall

Private detectives employed by the Copyright Licensing Agency may be about to infiltrate a government department to investigate suspicious that illegal photocopying is taking place.

CLA announced a crackdown on companies — and government departments — which through ignorance or arrogance are breaking the law.

body or quango not holding a CLA licence can expect to be under the closest scrutiny from the CLA and its investigators.

ments with such institutions as Morgan Stanley, Manchester City Council, and Fournier Pharmaceuticals after legal action.

mission is to go through the rubbish bins, looking for photocopies. If that produces no revelations, they may take over the company's cleaning contract, or even pose as a rival outfit, and interview some of the staff as if to poach them for better-paid jobs.

House of Commons about the measures each department was taking on compliance with copyright law. The Welsh Office answered: "Nothing".

The CLA, set up in 1982, now represents 50,000 authors and 1,500 publishers. The cost of a licence ranges from £200 for a small company to around £7,000 for a multinational.

Anti-stalking law could be used against racists and bullies at work

THE Government's anti-stalking law, published yesterday, is so widely drawn it will also be used against nuisance neighbours, workplace bullies and racists, the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, announced yesterday.

Statement says protests will continue until Orange parade allowed Fears of more loyalist violence follow arson attacks on school

Fears of serious violence during loyalist demonstrations at a Catholic church in Ballymena this weekend grew yesterday after arson attacks on a Catholic school and homes.

and the pan-nationalist front". A number of his Free Presbyterian churches have also been daubed with graffiti claiming that he is "no Carson", a reference to Mr Paisley's hero, the anti-Home Rule Irish Unionist and barrister Sir Edward Carson.



The burned-out home of a Catholic family in Ballymena, above, and, below, St Mary's primary school is cleaned up after it was fire-bombed yesterday



Generals call for an end to nuclear weapons

FIELD MARSHAL Lord Carver, a "Desert Rat" who rose to Britain's chief of defence staff, yesterday joined more than 60 generals and admirals worldwide calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Carver's belief that having a nuclear deterrent is riskier than not having one. Their statement, published in London, proposes three immediate moves to take advantage of the ending of the cold war: further large cuts in nuclear stockpiles, taking those that remain gradually off alert, and declaring that the world must work towards their total elimination.

national intervention" to destroy illicit weapons. The signatories say the end of the cold war favours disarmament. The UN's approval of a comprehensive test ban treaty earlier this year is one of several steps towards a nuclear-free world. But Russia and the US keeping warheads in storage after destroying their means of delivery creates a "reversible nuclear potential".

Sheep dip adviser quits over government 'gag'

A GOVERNMENT adviser on brain and other nerve damage caused by sheep dip has resigned from his post because he has been "gagged" by a new code of conduct which he says prevents him telling the full truth in court.

was appointed. It was a major reassurance to them that he would be there to find out the truth of whether they were entitled to compensation. He was the only independent member of the committee.

not relent. There was a conflict between continued membership and serving justice in a court of law. In effect, they were forcing me to be economical with the truth.

صوتنا من الامل

Brussels proposals include new powers on immigration, asylum and frontiers

The European Union's draft treaty — the blueprint for closer integration — was released in Brussels yesterday. The document forms not only the basis for next week's Dublin summit, but the text with which British Eurosceptics and Europhiles will do battle in the run-up to the general election. In many key areas, Britain is in a minority of one in objecting to the draft treaty's proposals, leading Eurosceptics to fear that objections will be drowned out by an integrationist majority. The European Commission president, Jacques Santer, said yesterday the EU would soon face its "moment of truth"



Britain is pledged to fight curbs on its border powers, although the European Court is likely to rule that UK passport checks on other EU citizens are illegal

Draft treaty's main points

- The social chapter, which Britain has an opt-out from, should be integrated into the treaty, extending to all member states the content of an agreement "which at present applies to 14 member states only".
- A new article giving the EU powers over internal and external border controls, asylum policy, and measures affecting refugees and displaced persons.
- Sets 2001 for full opening of internal borders.
- Establishes citizenship of the European Union, but this is intended to "complement and not replace national citizenship."
- Identifies fundamental human rights, the freedom of citizens to live and work throughout the Union, the fight against crime and drugs, and jobs as key priorities.
- Proposes a permanent upper limit of 700 members of the European Parliament, no matter how much the EU expands. In future there may be fewer MEPs from each country.
- Defers any proposal on the future size of the Commission, changes in the votes of each member state or on the key issue of "flexibility" — the right of those EU countries which wish to cooperate more closely to do so without being prevented by the veto of others.
- Future proposals for joint action in foreign and security policy to be prepared by a Brussels-based unit under control of a more powerful secretary-general of the Council of Ministers.

EU nearing moment of truth on treaty, warns Santer

Howard threatens veto on move to relax Europe passport checks

John Palmer in Brussels and Alan Travis

THE president of the European Commission, Jacques Santer, yesterday spelled out the choice facing the EU — and particularly Britain as its most sceptical member — as the union's draft treaty was unveiled before next week's Dublin summit. "The EU, he said, would soon face a 'moment of truth' in its quest for greater political

unity. Asked whether there was any prospect of the British Conservative government agreeing to closer union, Mr Santer replied: "In my experience agreement in these negotiations only comes at the last moment, sometimes in the last five minutes. But I do not rule out that under the Dutch Presidency [starting in June 1997] a moment of truth will arrive. "We will have to answer the question 'what is the political project for Europe 40 years after the Treaty of Rome?'"

Mr Santer told a press conference in Brussels given jointly with the Irish prime minister, John Bruton, whose country holds the current EU Council presidency. "We must decide between Europe as a political project, or it being a vast free trade area. That is when there will be a choice and a moment of truth." Mr Bruton, who will host the two day Dublin summit on December 13-14, was more circumspect when he was asked whether he believed John Major could agree to some of the proposals in the Irish EU Presidency draft treaty. These include new powers to be given to the European Union over immi-

gration, asylum, external frontiers and the fight against crime. Other proposals clearly point to the need for more majority voting, greater powers for the European Parliament and a stronger common foreign, security and defence policy. The Home Secretary, Michael Howard, greeted the disclosure of the new commission proposals on border controls with a robust declaration in London that he would veto any attempt at Dublin to lift British passport checks on EU citizens. But former Home Office minister, Charles Wardle, warned that the Government was overlooking an impending ruling from the European Court in Luxembourg that Britain's existing passport checks on other EU citizens were illegal.

"We have already signed away our right to independent border controls in the Single European Act," said Mr Wardle. "Lady Thatcher has said herself she was misled over her belief that we had negotiated an opt-out."

Although Britain has firmly resisted attempts to reduce passport checks at ports such as Dover on EU citizens, Mr Howard has been instrumental in creating a system of internal immigration checks. Letters went out to more than one million British companies this week telling them of new penalties for

employing illegal immigrants. However Mr Howard, who as a leading Cabinet Eurosceptic has continually raised the spectre of mass immigration if external UK border checks are dismantled, believes the Government can resist any further moves by other EU states to extend the current seven-strong Schengen agreement for free movement by EU citizens.

"We cannot stop discussion of this," he said yesterday. "But our position is clear we will use our veto at the inter-governmental conference to maintain our border controls. We believe in defending Britain's interests. If necessary even if that means being isolated in Europe." Mr Howard claimed that France had maintained passport checks at its Northern frontier and had reinstated them at all other borders this week after the Paris metro bombing.

Sceptics set to vent spleen

Michael White Political Editor

WARNING Conservative Euro-factions will get their long-awaited chance to air differences over the future direction of the European Union in a two-day Commons debate next Wednesday and Thursday — a day before the Dublin summit. Ministers confirmed the timetable last night as Tory sceptics on Europe responded with alarm to the EU treaty revisions produced by the Irish presidency of the Council of Ministers on border controls as well as the powers of the commission and Strasbourg parliament. Some sceptics believe a firm No is the key to a fifth election win. A senior back-

bencher said: "We must be like 1940, we must stand alone." Colleagues in the Lords claimed that a minister had finally admitted that member states can, in theory, be taken to the European Court for economic delinquency, whether or not they join the euro-currency. They pointed to Lord Mackay of Arbrecknish's speech in this week's Lords debate in which he told Lord Tebbit that "all members of the single market should take account of the community as a whole when running their economies." "Single markets work better with a degree of coordination in certain economic policies, in particular sound public finance and low inflation." He told Lord Tebbit he "did

not see any prospect" of member states being taken to the Court for failing to honour its obligations "unless it were to do something deliberately to destabilise the single market and the Community as a whole." Such circumstances were "so extreme" that no sensible government would do this, the junior minister told peers, some of whom were unconvinced. In the Commons the Prime Minister yesterday renewed his pledge that a referendum would be held before sterling was "linked in any way" with a European single currency. He told MPs at question time that the Tories had made a "firm commitment" to hold such a poll if the Government backed economic and monetary union in the next parliament.

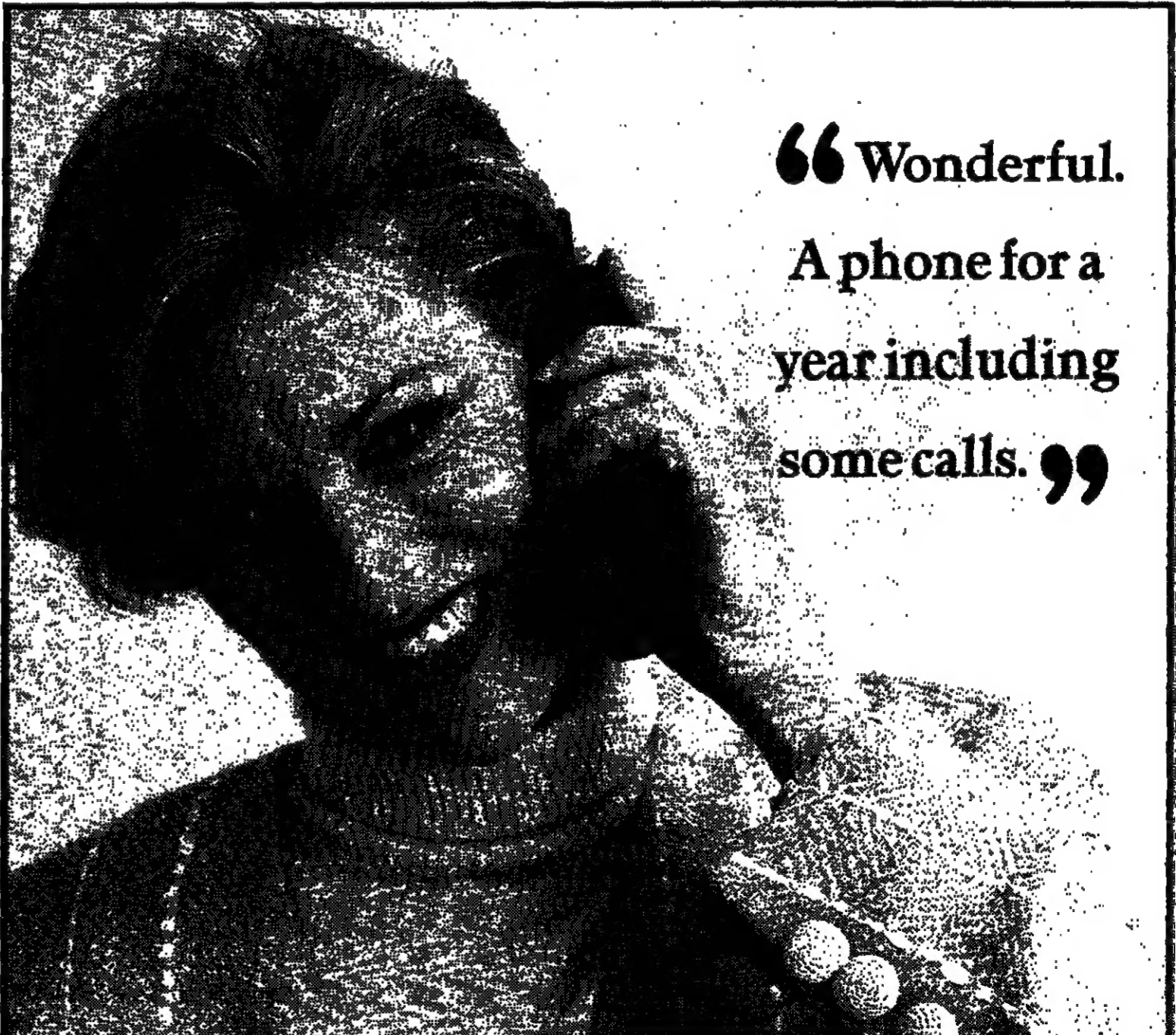
Birt plea to MPs over Murdoch's digital TV

Andrew Gull Media Correspondent

JOHN Birt, the BBC's director general, yesterday made a last-ditch appeal to MPs to ensure Rupert Murdoch's control over the gateway to digital television is fairly regulated. He said Parliament faced a crucial decision which could shape the fate of British television for the next 10 years. Mr Birt told the Commons national heritage committee that BSkyB had established de facto control of the gateway into the digital world. "They have got the battering rams of sport and movies — they have got the gateway."

They will control the interface with the viewer, with our licence keepers." Mr Murdoch plans to launch up to 200 digital satellite channels next autumn. Access will be through BSkyB's set-top box and it will have control of the subscription management systems. The BBC, which plans to offer its services via digital satellite, terrestrial and cable delivery methods, fears it may be unable to negotiate satisfactory terms with BSkyB. It wants to broadcast its free-to-air services — BBC1 and BBC2 in widescreen and 24-hour TV news — on digital satellite, alongside planned

subscription channels, including Catch-Up TV, offering instant repeats, and other themed education, comedy and drama services. Mr Birt said regulations on the licensing of the set-top boxes contained "important shortcomings". The Department of Trade and Industry has given Ofcom's director general, Don Crickshank, powers to intervene over anti-competitive behaviour. But Mr Birt said: "Every-one in Parliament, and in the community more widely, including BSkyB, should want orderly entry into the marketplace." It could only be achieved by having common standards through a single set-top box.



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Peace under pressure in former Yugoslavia

Station back on air

Julian Borger in Belgrade

THE independent Belgrade radio station B92 went back on the air yesterday evening in one of a series of concessions by the Serbian government...

Index, a student radio station, was also back on air. Meanwhile, the unpopular Socialist party boss in the second city of Nis quit and the government promised to pay arrears in student grants and pensions...

On the 18th consecutive day of protests against government rigging of last month's local elections, more than 130,000 demonstrators marched through Belgrade...



Protesters parade an effigy of President Slobodan Milosevic dressed in a prison uniform through Belgrade yesterday

Aid terms spelt out

Ian Black and David Fairhead

WESTERN powers are to increase pressure on the Bosnian authorities to hand over indicted war criminals and will directly link future aid to meeting pledges made under the Dayton peace accord...

A plan approved by a two-day peace implementation conference in London, attended by 50 countries, promised more resources for the Hague war crimes tribunal and the International Police Task Force (IPTF).

It also vowed, though without elaboration, to consider "what further measures can be taken to facilitate the delivery of indictees to the tribunal for trial".

But Carl Bildt, the high representative for Bosnia, said police would not have the power to arrest 70 indicted war criminals still at large...

the [separate] systems are included in the reconstruction assistance will also be linked to the fulfilment of pledges for Bosnia-wide road and rail systems, national car number plates and jointly administered airspace.

Some deadlines are given, though there is no mention of sanctions if they are not met: car reductions are to be completed by October 1997; municipal elections must be held by next summer...

Meanwhile, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development signed a \$21 million loan agreement with Bosnia yesterday, to improve Sarajevo's airport, roads and bridges. Officials said it was the first loan signed by both

'The economic and military help of Western countries should not be taken for granted'

Serb and Muslim-Croat entities.

The conclusion of the London conference should enable Nato and Russian ministers meeting in Brussels next week to give a clear military mission to the 31,000-strong multinational "stabilisation force" (S-FOR) preparing to take over in Bosnia on December 20.

The military chiefs have demanded that the job they do be precisely defined - especially the available forces are being halved. They want an "integrated" plan of action so they can provide security for relief agencies, police forces and refugee organisations without soldiers being expected to do those organisations' jobs...

The intention is to review S-FOR's progress every six months and gradually reduce its size. The military accepts that an international force may have to stay beyond the 18-month limit - a provisional deadline still debated within Nato. But it would be expected to have a different mandate and composition.

The 'handmaiden' who punches above his weight

Britain's ambassador to Serbia has rejected accusations that he is appeasing its presidential strongman, reports Julian Borger in Belgrade

IVOR ROBERTS, Britain's man in Belgrade, is a household name in Serbia. The students loudly demonstrating in the streets of the capital all seem to know who the British ambassador is. They do not think much of him.

Aleksandar Zivanovic, a politics student aged 23, was dismissive. "You may be here as far too close to [President Slobodan] Milosevic," he said. "He is on state television all the time, and then Milosevic says 'The West is on my side'."

That opinion is not limited to students. In the Washington Post last week, Morton Abramowitz, a former United States diplomat

and president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, wrote a bitter indictment of the West's "coddling" of Balkan dictators.

Mr Abramowitz attacked US officials, and added: "The British have been even worse in playing up to Milosevic. In Belgrade, their ambassador is widely regarded as his handmaiden."

The insult stung the Foreign Office into an immediate retort. Malcolm Rifkind described it as a "disgraceful attack on one of our finest diplomats".

Mr Roberts, aged 50, is the perfect example of what the Foreign Office likes to refer to as "punching above

our weight". The tall diplomat, whose trademark is a wry, world-weary sense of humour, has a higher profile and more access to the president than any other Western envoy, including the head of the US mission, Richard Miles.

Mr Roberts, who has been in Belgrade since March 1994, argues that by keeping a channel to Mr Milosevic, it has been possible to exert pressure on the Serbian regime both during the Bosnian war and in the uneasy peace after it.

"My role is not to appease," he said. "My role is to act as a conduit. I go round much of the time delivering very unpleasant

messages to the regime. People are willing to see me because they think of me as scrupulously fair."

The Serbian opposition questions just who is using whom. Ilija Djukic, a Democratic Party spokesman, argues that Mr Milosevic has failed to meet most of his obligations under the Dayton peace accord.

Meanwhile, Mr Djukic says, Mr Milosevic has been able to portray himself as a statesman and friend of the West. To this end, US and British diplomats have been "misused and manipulated".

Mr Roberts and Mr Miles appeared on television visiting state-run factories in October at the height of the campaign for federal and local elections. The official media portrayed the visits as a demonstration of approval for President Milosevic's economic policies.



High profile: Ivor Roberts

Mr Roberts is exasperated by the charge of taking sides. "It is very difficult to promote British commercial interests when every visit to a factory is manipulated by the state media."

British policy towards the Balkans has won the country few friends in the Bosnian and Croatian governments. However, Mr Roberts appears to be clawing back some of the lost ground.

When the independent Belgrade radio station, B92, was closed down by the regime this week, Mr Roberts was the first diplomat to turn up at the studios to lend vocal support.

"We were very grateful, he was here the moment we were closed down and spoke out in front of the cameras," said Aleksandar Yasovic, a B92 editor.

Peter Preston, page 9

EU commissioner backs soft drug legalisation

Stephen Bates in Brussels

IT IS time to experiment with legalising drugs because prohibition has not worked, according to Emma Bonino, an Italian European commissioner.

She told a conference at the European Parliament in Brussels yesterday: "Thanks to prohibitionist policies, drugs are now goods whose production, trade and consumption are illegal and yet they are probably the only goods which one can buy anytime and anywhere. McDonald's outlets occasionally close, so do gas

stations, but you will always be able to buy an illegal drug, no matter where you are and whether it is Christmas Eve or Ramadan."

"Should we not try to experiment with drug legalisation and discussion, reduction of demand through moral persuasion? My answer is clear and it is yes... I simply believe in personal responsibilities and personal choices."

"The state is not there to dictate personal choices and behaviours. Any meaningful interpretation of the rule of law should lead us to hold where there is no victim, there is no crime... We can

try to convince drug users that their choices are self-destructive, but we have no right to impose on them our choices."

Ms Bonino, whose responsibilities include humanitarian aid and consumer affairs but not drugs, stressed she was speaking in a personal capacity. But her call for a softer line is sure to anger most member states, many of which are trying to co-ordinate tougher sentencing policies.

The commissioner - who admitted to being a chain smoker but not to trying anything stronger than tobacco - believes that soft drugs

should be available for sale and that hard drugs could be made available, under medical supervision, by prescription.

The conference was organised by a radical anti-prohibitionist organisation and attended by, among others, Danny Cohn-Bendit, the student agitator of the 1960s who now sits as a German Green MEP. It came just days after the Netherlands infuriated member states by opposing attempts to harmonise drug laws at a meeting of justice and home affairs ministers.

The Netherlands takes over the rotating six-month EU presidency - and the lead in policy formulation - at the start of next year. But it has clashed with the other members over its liberal penal policies just as serious attempts are under way to co-ordinate the struggle against international crime.

Drug policy is the responsibility of individual states but the Netherlands' liberal laws, which permit the sale of small quantities of cannabis in regulated coffee shops, have irritated the French government in particular, which claims that the policy allows French citizens to smuggle the drug into the country.

Hedy d'Ancona, a former Dutch health minister, backed her country's policy at the conference, claiming that the legalisation of soft drugs had helped discourage experimentation with harder drugs and reduced trafficking.

A recent report by the EU's drugs monitoring unit shows little correlation between the harshness of a state's policies and the level of drug abuse. It estimates that 50 per cent of Europe's teenagers have tried cannabis, 16 per cent solvents and 5 per cent amphetamines. But only 2 per cent have experimented with cocaine and 1 per cent with heroin.

World news in brief

US warns China not to drop Hong Kong legislature

THE US said yesterday it was unhappy at the progress of human rights talks with China - and warned it will oppose any moves in Beijing to disband Hong Kong's elected legislature.

Changes to the legislature would be "both unnecessary and unwise", said Winston Loren, US assistant secretary of state, at the end of a two-day visit to Hong Kong. "The US has a very strong interest in seeing a smooth and successful transition here and will be working to support that process," he added.

China has vowed to replace the Hong Kong legislature with a provisional body when it takes over the territory in the middle of next year. A Beijing-controlled committee will name the 60-member interim body by the end of this month.

Apart from recent clashes over Hong Kong, Beijing and Washington have had other differences over the annual review of China's "Most Favoured Nation" trading status, which governs copyright protection and textile quotas. - Reuter.

Colombian massacre

TWENTY-FOUR peasant farmers, including a pregnant woman, were massacred yesterday in the jungle region of Sucre, northern Colombia, writes Jeremy Lennard in Bogotá.

Their bodies, mutilated to prevent identification, were dumped on the streets of Coloso and Tolo Viejo. A fighting paramilitary group - the self-defence force of Córdoba and Urabá - has claimed responsibility for the attack which brings the number of paramilitary killings to 60 in the past week. The Colombian security service suggested that the victims probably had links with Marxist guerrilla groups.

Meanwhile an entire family, including three children, was hacked to death with machetes in Boyacá province.



Madonna receives an artist achievement award during the seventh annual Billboard music awards in Las Vegas yesterday

More to settle in West Bank

Israel is letting Jews occupy 100 more homes in the West Bank, an aide to the prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, said yesterday.

David Bar-Ilan said permits had been granted for homes in the Jewish settlement of Kedumim near Nablus. Israel's previous government had refused to grant the occupancy permits. - Reuter.

called for her country to be excluded from the regional Association of South-East Asian Nations bloc. - Reuter.

Gay couples in America hoping to marry in Hawaii will have to wait, writes Christopher Reed in Los Angeles. Judge Kevin Chang who permitted such unions has now agreed to suspend judgment while the state appeals.

Royal operations This honoured King Bhumbol Adulyadej's 50th anniversary on the throne yesterday with a mass yomay ceremony for hundreds of men during a day-long, carnival-like event. - AP.

Suu Kyi freed

Burma's pro-democracy opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi was released from confinement at her Rangoon home yesterday and promptly

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Handwritten Arabic text: 'سكنا من الامل'

Clinton appoints woman to top job for the first time and keeps promise to create a bipartisan cabinet

Albright makes history

Martin Walker in Washington

THE United States president, Bill Clinton, made feminist history yesterday, nominating the US ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, to be the first woman secretary of state, as head of a new national security team.

Delivering on his promise to bring a bipartisan cast to his cabinet, Mr Clinton also named a retiring Republican senator from Maine, William Cohen, to be the new defence secretary. He will be the first published poet and novelist to run the Pentagon.

Mr Clinton's outgoing national security adviser, Anthony Lake, is to become the director of the CIA, and will be replaced at the national security council by his deputy, Sandy Berger.

These appointments, which had been widely trailed in recent days, leave some Dem-

ocrats discomfited. They include the former Senate leader George Mitchell, whose work on the Northern Ireland peace process had made him a strong contender for the state department, and the former senator Sam Nunn, who had been tipped for the Pentagon. Mr Mitchell is expected to be given the consolation prize of the next supreme court appointment.

The seal on the choice of Ms Albright was this week's formal act of surrender by the UN secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, giving up his attempt to defy the US veto and run for a second term.

But what became an almost personal duel between the Egyptian UN secretary-general and Ms Albright has left bruised feelings in France, Africa and the Arab world, which could yet haunt her.

Born in Czechoslovakia, and with pungent memories of British bomb shatters during the second world war before coming with her diplomat father to the US, Ms Albright is fluent in Polish, French and Russian.

'She is a woman of deep conviction and grace under pressure'

She brings a strong emotional commitment to her job, which was most visible in her constant lobbying for US commitment to Bosnia in 1993-94, and in her belief that eastern European countries have a right to join Western institutions such as Nato and the European Union.

A former professor of international relations at Georgetown University, Ms Albright came to know Mr Clinton, then governor, and his wife when she hosted a series of private seminars on foreign affairs at her home, to which the rising stars of the Democratic Party were invited in the 1980s.

Ms Albright's cause was strongly urged by Mrs Clinton, who is a personal friend, and by women's groups who lobbied the White House to remind the president that "the gender gap" of women's votes had re-elected him. She was also strongly backed by General John Shalikashvili at the Pentagon, with whom she cultivated strong links on several trips to eastern Europe.

"She is a unique blend of the skilled diplomat and the compassionate humanitarian, a woman of brilliant thought, deep conviction and grace under pressure," Gen Shalikashvili said last year.

Ms Albright is considered hard-working and outspoken, but some question her credentials as a strategic thinker on the global scene.

Mr Clinton's choices also reflected the influence of the vice-president, Al Gore, who supported Mr Cohen and who needs female voters for his planned presidential race four years from now.

The new national security team of Ms Albright, a hawkish Democrat, and Mr Cohen, a dovish Republican, should face little difficulty in gaining consent from the Republican Senate.

Mr Cohen, aged 56, rose to national prominence when he cast one of the first Republican votes to impeach President Richard Nixon, and later played a leading role in the Iran-Contra hearings.

But the man to watch may be Mr Berger, who first met Mr Clinton when they worked together on George McGovern's anti-Vietnam war presidential campaign in 1972.

Poet, tough and efficient — and too self-assured to need to grab the spotlight — Mr Berger has forged a strong relationship with Mr Clinton in the past four years.



The appointment of Madeleine Albright (left), Washington's outspoken envoy to the UN, as secretary of state was sealed with the surrender by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (right) of his attempt to seek a second term. Anthony Lake (top) becomes CIA director and the Republican William Cohen (above) becomes the first poet to run the Pentagon

Jail for talk show guest who killed gay admirer

Richard Thomas reports from Washington on a trial which has raised concerns about 'trash TV'

CONTROVERSY in the US over so-called "trash TV" television shows intensified yesterday after a man was sent to jail for murdering a gay admirer who confessed to his crush on a talk show.

Despite a moving but garbled plea from Jonathan Schmitz, aged 26, a court in Michigan said he would serve between 25 and 50 years for his crime.

The family of his victim, Scott Amedure, welcomed the verdict and pledged to press on with a \$25 million (£15 million) lawsuit against the Jenny Jones programme which led to the killing. On the programme, a guest is brought face to face with a secret admirer.

Schmitz, who said he had been humiliated by the televised confrontation with Amedure in March 1995, told Judge Francis O'Brien he regretted the murder and its impact on the victim's family.

"Will they accept my sorry?" he asked. "I found it in my sorrow... It is squeezing my heart, it has restriction on my soul. Set me free by taking it or leave me in this hole."

Opponents of programmes which rely on shock and exposure to win viewers said the conclusion of the trial was a lesson in the growing dangers of "trash TV".

The testimony of the show's host, Jenny Jones, in which she said the content and development of each programme was unknown to her, fuelled criticism of the networks for running sexually charged five chat shows. At least one network has dropped the show, and the Republican challenger Bob Dole seized on the downward drive of television and Hollywood during his presidential campaign.

Schmitz's family blamed the show for their son's loss of control three days after

the recording, when he shot Amedure after finding a suggestive note on his doorstep.

His father, Allyn Schmitz, said: "The show's secret admirer threw my son into a fit of depression. My son was a good boy. We raised Jonathan with honour and love." Lawyers for the Schmitz family said they would immediately appeal against the ruling — which also added two years for illegal firearms possession.

But the 32-year-old victim's mother, Patricia Graves, struggling to speak through her tears, described her son's killer as "a monster who deserves to pay for the rest of his life".

Judge O'Brien said he had taken account of Schmitz's depression and alcoholism in deciding on an appropriate sentence. "But you still have to be accountable to society," he said.

Trial witnesses said Schmitz believed he was on the show to meet a female admirer, and was humiliated when Amedure appeared. He had attended the show — unbeknown to him titled "Same-Sex Secret Crushes" but never aired — with a friend who knew Amedure.

Although campaigners against trash TV — including the Democrat senator Joe Lieberman — are stepping up their campaign against confrontational shows, the Jenny Jones programme is continuing undaunted. Future topics include "My Mom had an affair with my man" and "I let my lover have affairs while I was pregnant".

the recording, when he shot Amedure after finding a suggestive note on his doorstep.

the recording, when he shot Amedure after finding a suggestive note on his doorstep.



Schmitz sentenced to at least 25 years for murder

US-Russia summit next year

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia agreed yesterday in a 20-minute telephone conversation to hold a summit in the US in the first half of next year, writes Martin Walker in Washington.

But the precise date remains in question because of Russian objections to the enlargement of Nato.

The two leaders voiced satisfaction with their mutual

desire to advance relations between the two countries.

Russian and US officials have said the two presidents both wanted to meet following their re-election. They last met in Moscow in April at a nuclear safety summit.

The Nato dispute threatens to make this the most difficult and possibly the most momentous East-West summit since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Mr Yeltsin, just released from his Moscow clinic after his apparently successful recuperation from heart surgery, is pressing hard to come to the US before the Nato summit.

He is expected to make one last appeal against the absorption of former Warsaw Pact countries into Nato, arguing that nothing could be more calculated to inflame extremist and nationalist opin-

ion in Russia. Mr Clinton has said that he intends to use the next Nato summit in the spring to announce the admission of the first eastern European entrants, expected to be Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

He is hoping to mollify Russia with a new security charter, which would be something more than a letter but far less than a treaty, between Nato and Russia.

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Diddling war pensioners

John Major was rattled because he was rumbled

THE CHARITY COMMISSION warned people yesterday about bogus collectors dressing up as Father Christmases in the festive season to take advantage of public goodwill. "Appearances," it declared "can be deceptive." It should not have stopped there. A well-dressed man in Parliament tried yesterday — against all the facts — to dress himself up as defender of war pensioners and their dependents when his party was in the process of making them £50 million poorer. The Prime Minister described yesterday's report in The Guardian on his party's latest changes to war pensions as misleading and inaccurate. He denied any war pensioner was going to lose money. Tony Blair, the Labour leader and Alan Beith, the Liberal Democrat MP, had just been misled by the Guardian's reports. All the Government was doing was simplifying 19 complex measures and following new independent medical advice concerning pensions for loss of hearing. Perhaps we can clarify some points.

The losses Mr Major disputes are not our figures but the estimates of his Social Security Secretary, Peter Lilley. We were quoting from a private letter sent by Mr Lilley to William Waldegrave, the Chief Secretary, protesting over the cuts which the Treasury had demanded. It was Mr Lilley, not us, who calculated that the savings from the "simplification" of the procedures (like not sending out reminders to return claims or seek increases) would rise to £15 million and the savings from the new restrictions on pension entitlement to hearing loss would rise to £35 million. Indeed, according to the confidential letter, this last cut raised more money than originally estimated in the initial negotiations.

Then there is Mr Major's claim that no existing war pensioner would be affected. Tell that to Tony Heath, who was blown up in a tank in 1945, and

describes what it was like on the opposite page. Mr Heath receives a small pension for his partial loss of hearing from that event but under the new changes, he will no longer be eligible for further pension increases as his hearing deteriorates. Until now, Mr Heath was assured of a succession of further increases as his hearing got worse. Now he will get nothing extra no matter how much it deteriorates. He is one of 10,000 a year who will lose out by this cut.

Mr Major yesterday claimed his ministers were only following independent medical advice — that hearing damaged during a war does not deteriorate further. This is a bit much from a government which has ignored medical advice on a host of issues: banning tobacco advertising, the effects of poverty on health, the need for better sex education for teenagers, stricter drink driving controls. Moreover, it is advice disputed by other medical experts, who explain that but for war damage, many ex service people would be able to absorb age-related deterioration without any effect on their hearing. This has been the approach until now. Moreover, it was an approach upheld by all six social security ministers until William Waldegrave insisted on imposing the cuts. As Mr Lilley noted in his letter to Mr Waldegrave: "You will recall that I said at the bilateral that all my ministers were against this move and it is not something we would choose to do..."

John Major was rattled yesterday in Parliament, slamming down his papers on the despatch box and lashing out at the Opposition and The Guardian. He was rattled for a very good reason. He had been rumbled. His Chancellor's innocuous paragraph on war pensions in last week's budget was in fact a cover for cuts which were rightly described yesterday as "shabby and mean-minded".

The new nuclear orthodoxy

Who are we to resist the arguments of so many generals?

BANNING THE bomb has become an orthodox goal among those who know best what nuclear war would mean. The real coalition of ex-generals and admirals who called yesterday for a determined drive to rid the world of nuclear weapons is talking on the basis of the most intimate hands-on experience. This initiative follows the recommendation of the equally weighty Canberra Commission on eliminating nuclear warheads. It is less than three years since General George Lee Butler stepped down from running the US Strategic Air Command. On taking over there, he had cut the number of nuclear targets by four-fifths. The strategists, he concluded, were living in a world of illusion, with a secret war plan for a huge over-kill strike upon Moscow. He and many colleagues were also increasingly worried by the possibilities of nuclear war by accident. He says he had studied an "appalling array of accidents and incidents" involving nuclear weapons. An echo of these recently surfaced, in spite of MOD attempts at suppression, in the reports of several nuclear near-disasters at US airfields in Britain. Field Marshal Lord Carver should also be taken very seriously when he argues that nuclear bombs have "no utility as a military weapon." He points to the lack of strategic rationale after the cold war, the appalling destructiveness if such weapons should come to be used, and the growing danger of proliferation unless nuclear disarmament can be achieved.

All five overt nuclear powers claim that they would like to see a reduction to nuclear zero: but not one of them really regards this as a desirable goal. Their secret conviction that nuclear weapons should be retained is based on dubious history. There was no nuclear conflict during the cold war, they argue, therefore there could not have been one. The Soviet Union collapsed and therefore the deterrent "worked". The logical flaws are evident in any case, the situation today is very different. Proliferation, as General Butler remarks, cannot be contained "in a world where a handful of self-appointed nations both arrogate to themselves the privilege of owning nuclear weapons, and extol the ultimate security assurances they assert such weapons convey." To argue that nuclear weapons are an insurance against a new cold war is a sure way of strengthening the hardliners in Moscow.

Those who spoke out against nuclear weapons before, who were labelled peaceniks or consympas, who were the target of secret surveillance, harassment and dirty tricks, may be allowed a quiet smile now that their heresies have become so widely accepted. But the dominant feeling must be satisfaction that this is now a mainstream debate. The latest move in Washington may even help persuade President Clinton to adopt nuclear renunciation as an explicit goal. It would be prudent as well as principled for the British government not to be left behind.

The cost of infamy for a day

It will take ages for trivia-challenged Birkbeck to recover

BIRKBECK College London has many claims to educational fame. But there is bound to be a fear in deepest Bloomsbury this week that the college is doomed for a while to be synonymous in the public mind with a single event — Tuesday night's round of University Challenge, in which Birkbeck suffered the show's heaviest trouncing, losing by 360 points to 40 to a rampant Manchester University team.

No one seriously supposes that such a walkover is an accurate reflection of intellectual standards at Birkbeck or of its academic qualities relative to Manchester. No college which employed Eric Hobsbawm for so long need be afraid to draw braininess with the best. But mud has a nasty way of sticking, which is why the politically savvy Master of Birkbeck, Tessa Blackstone, rapidly rebutted any such suggestion after the defeat on Tuesday. Only a game? Tell it to the admissions office.

It's all terribly unfair. The world is scattered with splendid people and institutions only remembered for trivial humiliation. Now they are stuck with it. Glamorgan cricket club used to have a spin bowler called Malcolm Nash, who led a blameless and successful life but who was and is famous only for the over he bowled to Sir Garfield Sobers in 1968 in which every ball was hit for six.

Twenty-five years ago, it was possible for Balliol College Oxford to swank its way on to University Challenge, get humiliatingly drubbed by St David's Lampeter, and still come safe home without anyone thinking it was worth anything more than a paragraph in William Hickey. Today, in the era of educational league tables, such Corinthian unconcern is no longer possible. But anyway, who would want to go to a university where, as Jeremy Paxman has observed, they obviously read dictionaries in bed?



Letters to the Editor

Various Lords a-leaping

A fertile choice of views on the Pro-Life abortion lobby

SOME family background may help to put Lord Cranborne's defence of the hereditary principle (Save the gifted amateurs in the Lords, December 5) in context. He sits in the Lords as a life peer and will be unaffected by Labour's proposed change. He also, confusingly, has the courtesy title of Viscount, since he can expect to become the Seventh Marquess of Salisbury. Courtesies titles do not confer a right to sit in the Lords, which is why the life peerage was created.

The Cecils (Lord Cranborne's family) are the most remarkable political dynasty in the country. The Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and (future) Seventh Marquesses have all been in the Cabinet, the Third Marquess as Queen Victoria's last prime minister. However, the most eminent of the Cecils is certainly the Third Marquess, who carried out a long rearguard action against democracy (a synonym for mob rule in 19th-century parlance) and, when he resigned from the Disraeli cabinet over the extension of the franchise in the Second Reform Act of 1867.

Lord Cranborne refers to the hereditary peers as, in effect, chosen by lot. This is a false analogy. In a lottery anyone can buy a ticket. Lots of tickets for this lottery were sold in 1964 when (with only two subsequent exceptions) the creation of new non-royal hereditary peerages ended. He has a valid point about having a seat in the House which is full of professional politicians as the Commons. The challenge is to find a way of enlisting disinterested talent that does not simply depend on being the son of your father.

David Bewers,
33 Redcliffe Gardens,
Bilford IG1 3HQ.

LORD CRANBORNE believes that Tory hereditary peers "represent" the common man. If one is look-

ing for a representative group which is white, male, public-school educated with an above-average involvement in field sports and the support of charities, Tory hereditary peers are a very accurate sample.

Lord Carter,
House of Lords,
London SW1A 0AA.

LORD CRANBORNE (or The Viscount Cranborne, as he once styled himself in correspondence with me, as if he were a pub in the Mile End Road) is economical with the truth.

The hereditary peerage is not "a body chosen by lot" — unless we assume that to have been the means employed by previous monarchs to select their bedfellows of whatever sexual orientation. And to suggest that the degenerate descendants of these encounters are "not paid" when they presume to govern us ignores both their parliamentary allowances and, often, their ministerial salaries.

Why do we, alone in Europe, continue to put up with this sort of thing?
(Dr) J E Coombes,
33 Argy Heights,
Colchester CO2 8AD.

OF course Lord Cranborne doesn't feel the need to climb the greasy pole of ambition — he was, after all, born pretty close to the top and has no need to seek anyone's votes. But he mistakes the objection to the hereditary vote:

retain their power over women by forcing them to be thin (or "fat" and unhappy) does not stand up. A thin woman, by coming closer to the male form, can more easily challenge men in their traditional power bases by blurring the distinction between women and men. If men wanted to control women by means of their weight, logically they would insist that women put on weight to conform to a "feminine" ideal that women admits was prevalent until very recently. It would thus be easier to confine them to a female ghetto.

Steve Green,
1 Castle Hill, Cragg Vale,
Hebden Bridge, W Yorks.

ROWE claims that men "need" to feel more powerful than women, and that the imposition of thinness is just another manifestation of this. It might be more productive to look at the needs of the food industry to sell us lots of sugar and fat. One could consider the increased production of "body beautiful" images of both men and women and how this oppresses us, but also expresses some desire made by us.

There is confusion also on the issue of illness. Anorexia, bulimia and obesity threaten well-being at least, and kill at worst. It is an academic and irresponsible posture to claim that naming these as illnesses is just another male construct. One suspects that, couched in the terms Rowe employs, we will always be slaves to some ideal, and that there will be no natural or free use or image of our bodies.

Jaimie Shorten,
53 Alkham Road,
London N16 7AA.

It is not to keep people like him out of the second House but to make such people subject to some democratic control. He can have his place if the people so choose, by whatever mechanism they choose — being born is not enough.

Lesley Furlonger,
Park House,
Bradwell, Braintree,
Essex CM7 5EP.

LORD CRANBORNE has a point: there needs to be an adequate check on the powers of the government of the day, and the system he advocates — amateur politicians, unpaid, chosen at random — is a good one. Once the voting rights of hereditary peers have been abolished, let all National Lottery jackpot winners be given life peerages. We could call them the Lords of the Round Table.

Jane Carnall,
63 Montgomery Street,
Edinburgh EH7 6EZ.

PERHAPS the best example of the absurdity of the hereditary principle is the way the poll tax was forced through on the votes of hereditary peers, despite the life peers' votes against.

If memory serves, one of the staunchest proponents of the poll tax on the night of the vote in the Lords was that champion of all that is decent and honest in our parliamentary system, Lord Brocket.

Paul Richards,
109 Hammermith Bridge Road,
London W6 9DA.

CATHERINE Bennett should look on the bright side of British abortion politics (Abortion debate is still a minefield, December 4). When pro-life candidates are planning to stand for election, it simply shows that democracy is working.

The parliamentary compromise which exists on abortion politics is in many respects very decent. You vote according to your conscience. If you think it is always the woman's right to choose, you may vote that way; if you believe the foetus is a human life which is entitled not to be deliberately destroyed, you may vote the other way. If pro-life candidates get enough support, that's democracy.

Barbara Follett elicited protest not merely because she is "pro-choice" but because Emily's List has contained a coercive clause which a pro-life candidate could not sign and it thus breached the parliamentary tradition of respecting conscience. If Mrs Follett would make a statement saying that she, and Emily's List, respect the consciences of those who think differently from her, and that pro-life women are equally entitled to seek entry to Emily's List, she would be following in the honourable parliamentary tradition of not applying whips on matters of conscience.

Mary Kenny,
The Reform Club,
London SW1.

CATHERINE Bennett rightly recognises that media perceptions of the debate over abortion have tended to exclude the middle ground. But many Christians are not "religious fanatics".

The last General Synod debate on abortion in 1993 clearly expressed views which should command wide support: there are far too many abortions; the demand for abortion must be reduced; abortion should never be undertaken lightly but only after the most serious moral reflection; when it must be carried out it should be done as early as possible; late abortion "for serious foetal handicaps" must be interpreted strictly.

If public support is to be won for such a position it is important for voices to be heard resisting the direction taken by abortion campaigners in the US.

(Rt Rev) Richard Harries,
Bishop of Oxford,
Diocesan Church House,
North Hinksey,
Oxford OX3 0NE.

ANTI-ABORTIONISTS may choose to label themselves "pro-life" but a more apt description would be anti-reality.

If these sanctimonious busy-bodies were really concerned with anything more fruitful than throwing their "moral" weight around, they would have to admit that there is more to solving the "problem" of abortion than their simplistic programme of a) outlawing the procedure (we all know what happens then) and b) stopping people (particularly the young, the unmarried, the lower orders etc) from having sex.

If they are serious about reducing the number of terminations, they should lead their (depressingly) substantial influence and high profile to campaigning for better family-planning services and compulsory and effective sex education.

Robert Cartwright,
Chairman, British Organisation of Non-Parents,
BM Box 5986,
London WC1N 3XX.

CATHERINE Bennett claims the "militantly pro-abortion" are a figment of the pro-life lobby's imagination. Later she quotes the Abortion Law Reform Association as saying: "As far as we are concerned it is irrelevant what the foetus looks like until it is capable of existence outside the womb". Irrelevant too, this position implies, if it feels pain, or reacts to familiar voices or music. Sounds pretty militant to me.

Peter Totman,
Aston Road,
London SW20.

A brush-off

IT is outrageous for Natacha Walter (Small art prize in London: not many shocked, November 28) to suggest our art establishment is "profoundly unoriginal". It takes five years of art-school training with the most arduous, intensive suspension of mind, sense and reason to achieve the skills in fashion today. How else could Sarah Lucas relive her infancy, or Rachel Whiteread gain the confidence for her jelly-mould sculptures? Look at the pain these artists bear: incessant media coverage, huge cheques from the Saatchis, canapés by the cartload, not to mention the hugs and kisses of you-know-who. Marie McDougall,
172 Huntingfield Road,
London SW16 5ES.

A Country Diary

THE BURDEN and WEXFORD, Ireland: There I was, in my beloved county, Wexford — the return of the native! I climbed Carrigrohane (Byrne's Rock) near New Ross. The wind tore at the heath and pine as I scrambled up the moist and slippery moss-covered rocks — good, hard granite ones, darkened to deep brown by rain and very different from our Burden limestone which turns slate blue to pewter in similar weather. I was accompanied by a neighbour's spaniel which frequently disappeared into thick undergrowth, re-emerging to check on me. When I reached the top, I could see below neatly tilled fields mixed with pastures; in the middle distance Beg Erin Hill where a beautiful gold tern was found. A little further lay Slieve Collette (Wooded Mountain) where as children we cycled for summer picnics and always to watch, from a distance and well-hidden, the lovely wild horses native to its summit and slopes. Indeed Carrigrohane itself was the

SARAH POYNTE

Diary
Matthew Norman

THE Diary has learned how Lord Carnarvon's spirits must have soared when he found Tutankhamen's tomb. For a wondrous object, spoken of with awe for years but until now thought to be mythical, has come into our possession. Your Guide To Working For Harriet is a 10-page guide... 10 pages; what a triumph for the guide...

YET another document arrives from the heart of the Labour Party. This one is a letter from Jack The Hat Straw, replying to the item about the fedora he has taken to wearing in tribute to his idol and namesake, Jack McVitie...

DRESSING news from the last-notice page of the London Evening Standard: the splendidly named Everhappy Ltd has called in the receiver.

IN the London Review of Books, Paul Foot reviews my friend and fellow New Labour self-effacing autobiographer Full Disclosure, and notes an omission which he is pleased to correct. Soon after becoming editor in 1983, Andrew wrote to a senior official at Kensington Council on Sunday Times newspaper...

I AM baffled to note that suddenly, thanks to Channel 4 sitcom Father Ted, the word "feck" is permissible even in middle-market tabloids. Last week, for example, the phrase "feck off" appeared with no hint of an asterisk in the Express. But why is "feck" alright where "fuck" or even "cuck" is not? For guidance, we turn to my old friend and ally in the battle against "No. 10"...

AN important announcement from the medical world. Ellen Harald Møl, a Norwegian, has been awarded a prestigious "Ig-Nobel" prize by the Harvard-published Annals of Improbable Research, the Fortean Times reports. The award honours people whose actions "cannot or should not be reproduced"...



Imagine Bosnia on the streets of Coventry

Commentary
Peter Preston

THE faces, tramping day after day through the swirling sleet of the Balkan winter, speak eloquently for themselves. Men and women, old and very young, all seeming to glow with determination. Television has done a good job here (maybe because Kate Adie is there). You know that the Belgrade streets are alive with peaceful protest. You know that a debased regime — the front of everything horrible that happened to Bosnia — is reeling near disintegration. We know what the ordinary people of Serbia are doing for themselves. But that is not enough. Where are the rest of us?

Where, in the fortnight of mounting disgust since Slobodan Milosevic wiped away the results of elections he'd lost, are the front page newspaper stories that go with the TV

pictures? Where are the backbenchers hopping up and down? Where, passing puffs of smoke, is our Government — or our Opposition? Where's the pressure?

The questions, you see, are not really home thoughts far abroad. They begin and end at home. Half a decade ago, as the final bastions of the old Eastern European world crumbled, we saw the same faces, the same determination and joy. There was Prague, suddenly free. There was Berlin, suddenly reunited. There — most movingly of all — was Bucharest. Shared experience and shared exultation.

Was that merely self-serving — simple relief that a seeming threat to cosy British hearths and Christmas boozes had been magically removed? Or did it mean something more: that the freedoms, the human dignities, we had were available again to oppressed millions in a scatter of grim, grey lands?

The last few years have brought a dismal weariness. Maybe understandably. Compassion Fatigue — too many pictures of too many people far away, starving — has its roots in uncomprehending helplessness. More doom, more disaster, more Africa. Is

there indeed nothing to be done? But now, it seems, we have Idealism Fatigue: in Europe, about the borderslands of Europe. That's different, and somehow bleaker. Turning the tide of despair is one thing; failing to ride a tide of hope quite another.

Margaret Thatcher, long ago, was right about one thing. True democracies tend not to go to war with each other. The intrinsic dialogue between leaders and led is too complex and human, too nervously apprehensive. Peace and freedom do go together. Peace in the Balkans goes with freedom in the Balkans. Maybe we can't ordain that; but nor can we stand aside when there is a spontaneous combustion of change. To prop up Milosevic today in order to preserve the patchwork fabric of Dayton a year ago is monstrous error, priorities malignly reversed. One reason why Serbia is bubbling is because there has been a year of peace — a time to contemplate not external threat but internal corruption. A freedom agenda.

Ah, you say, but who's to blame? Somebody up there we don't like. Bill Clinton and his introverted administration of transition. Malcolm Rifkind and his twisting FO minions.

The serried, squabbling ranks of Euro-diplomacy, too keen on keeping the peace they have, to see the wider world beyond.

For once, though, the parcel doesn't pass so easily. Clinton hasn't jettisoned the walls of Belgrade or put re-imposed sanctions back at the top of the list. But his words have been fierce, his injunctions against a Balkan Tiananmen Square unmistakable. And the Voice of America has been summoned to the colours: to broadcast the news and the views that Milosevic has swept from the airwaves, banning the few independent stations and journalists Serbia had left.

That, at least, shows America can still recognise a freedom issue when it slaps the

Peace and freedom do go together. Peace in the Balkans goes with freedom in the Balkans

State Department in the face. Of course there should be more than this. But the place to demand and to generate it is not in the chancelleries of the West: it's where hundreds of thousands of brave Serbs have begun for themselves — with the people.

Do we care as we used to? Do we identify? It's easy to explain — fear of a global threat removed — why slumping back into small corners is the natural option. Why a Baywatch babe's new baby or broken marriage is top of the

shop. Why the fate of a Tory MP after two glasses of plonk seems to matter. Why byzantine thrashings over the small print of Maastricht has the political classes chattering interminably. All of these are complex choices of selection, and none of them are taken without a good deal of research information on what the punter — the viewer, listener, reader — wants.

But if we're all in a way, why, we can all sit up straight. There are great, binding causes left. The first of them, for us, is the spread of democracy: from belief, and from the self-interest of secure peace. Perhaps there can't be equality to such favour. We may, feebly, leave the Burmese generals or Beijing until a little later. Slobodan Milosevic, however, is our European affair (just like Franjo Tudjman). These are the spectres at our gates.

Their fall — or their survival — make an immediate, identifiable difference. They open up a part of Europe, or close it down in continued repression. And the faces on the streets of Belgrade might be faces on the streets of Coventry: people like us, wanting what we have for ourselves.

That seems to me a cause worth stirring for. And the lack of such stirring — the absence of pressure — is the difference that five years have made to us. No more sunken calculation. Of course there may be Dayton difficulties. Of course the leaders who follow Milosevic may prove frail. Zoran Djindjic, the new main man, thinks that "if you want to pursue morality, you're better off in church". But what temporising business of ours is it to seek to prove him right?

Tony Blair and I pursue the older woman



Bel Littlejohn

DON'T get me wrong. The polls have never looked better. We're on course for victory — great news for everyone, not least my good friend Barbara Follett. Once she's won her seat at long last she won't have to spend all her weekends in Stevenage, bless her. But Tony's always been a worrier, never a guy who can sit back with a glass of rosé, a packet of Pringles and the latest Jeanette Winterson and breathe a sigh of relief that at long last, in the words of the late, great Bob Marley, "everything's gonna be all right". In fact, as he said to Sue last week, you'll never catch Tony putting Free's All Right Now on the hi-fi when there's a wishing well within reach — but that's the guy's character and I for one respect him for it.

What's come to be known as Tony's Inner Caucus — that's my own good self, Alastair Campbell, Jack Straw and Tony — have a twice-weekly Poll Meeting (we don't like to worry the lovely John Prescott — he's already doing such valuable work in the constituencies). In these meetings, Alastair reads out all the latest polls, and we adjust our policies and personalities accordingly. "It's the dog that does it," explained Alastair. "Of those polled, 72 per cent said they'd prefer Portillo with a dog to Blunkett without the dog."

You know, Tony can be a very strong leader when he wants. He immediately took the matter in hand, and told me to draw up a ten-point plan to supply all members of the Shadow Cabinet with household pets by the weekend. He himself would issue orders that the Shadow Cabinet should follow David Blunkett in taking these animals with them wherever they go, and that he saw them as mandatory for any television appearance.

I'm happy to say the plan is already proving a great success. Early reports suggest that Robin Cook's appearance on Channel 4 News last night to answer questions on Zaire with his new goldfish, Barney, has sent his personal rating up a full six points, whilst Jack Straw has scored hugely among women voters between the ages of 45 and 65 with his performance on Newsnight with his floppy-eared rabbit, Snudge. Not long now 'til next Tuesday, when John Prescott appears on Question Time with his Shetland Pony, Digger.

"BUT I was thinking Barbara Castle," said Jack. "They're very different." "Not HER!" said Alastair, witheringly. "Opinion this, opinion that. The woman's all opinions. We'll never win this election with opinions." It was then I had my brainwave. "How's about Margaret Beckett?" I said. "She used to have opinions, but I'm pretty sure she's stopped." "Has anyone seen her



Half a century ago, a teenaged British soldier died in a tank in the arms of Tony Heath, who survived. The Government's thanks: it targets war pensioners to save a quick buck

Is this what he died for?

THE Government's plan to "save" a few million by cutting war pensions rates high on the Richter Scale of squallid meanness which characterises John Major's last stand. The Prime Minister was two years and 26 days old when, on April 26, 1945, the tank I helped to crew was knocked out in the battle for Bremen. Peter Lilley and William Waldegrave, lead players in the final battle, weren't even born then.

A comrade — yes, we didn't shrink from such terms then — died, his bloodstained body collapsing across me. The rest of us — four teenagers — escaped with what the medical officer later declared to be "minor wounds" as he pulled bits of metal from my left leg with a pair of forceps. My hearing suffered more. I have a small pension to prove it. Time passes. At intervals the nightmare returns. The hearing deteriorates.

Step forward a Government whose members have barely heard a shot fired in anger. The actuaries have no doubt told them that veterans are dwindling in number. The "sweeteners" the brave Ian Sprayson, Mr Lilley's spear-carrier, proposes are designed to split the ex-servicemen's organisations. It won't work. Major, Lilley, Waldegrave et al are warriors in a coldhearted campaign against men and women who helped to keep democracy safe. That's not a veteran's cliché — not if you've seen men die in battle, not if you've had to stand watch over the SS guards of Belsen.

This Government is deeply influenced by the Thatcherite mantra that there is no such thing as a society. It is lucky for them that servicemen and women acted in ways contrary to such a pernicious doctrine. Edward Moulding, who died on the banks of the Weser all those years ago, was at one with the rest of us — Gordon, Jones 59, Jones 49 (the Army distinguished people with the same sur-

name by taking on the last two digits of their serial number), and Heath, serial number 14440458. We shared chores like refuelling our tank at night, petrol slopping over your boots and praying no bullet would come your way. And cooking. And standing guard when there was a lull. I see no such desire among ministers to act in a broader interest. Their sordid policy is simple: let's see how we can live our lives in comparative comfort, without having to pay again for rallying to a cause universally deemed worth rallying to. The memories will never fade. I don't know if John Major ever weeps, except in rage at his inability to convince Britain that all will be well if only... I did, all those years ago, when we lowered Edward Moulding into his temporary grave. And I did Tory veterans like Sir Edward Heath will resist the upstarts' mean plots. There is something somewhere about a society (sorry, Margaret Thatcher) being judged by the way it treats minorities. Veterans are being added to lone parents, the unemployed and the socially deprived as targets for "savings". Teenagers in khaki circa 1945 shared more than danger and death. Cooperation and mutual support saw us through many an encounter, and no doubt that was said by teenagers in field grey as well. When I ponder the philosophy of that's not too strong a word — behind the fire directed at veterans, I wonder what the old hands of my tank would say. I'm sure that if Edward Moulding rose from his lonely grave, he would say "Away with this shabby play. This is not the Britain I died for."

Step forward Marvel Crumpacker

DJ Taylor salutes the heroine of Eurostar: a woman with a name beyond fiction

STEP forward Marvel Crumpacker into your new role as icon. Not only has Ms Crumpacker of Fort Wayne, Indiana, whose picture appeared in so many of yesterday's newspapers, earned her place in history by daring to be one of the few people to travel on the newly reopened Eurostar Express; she is also living proof of the most baffling of all aesthetic prescriptions — the foibility of inventing a name half as wonderful as those possessed by real people. Names are a longstanding

novelist's dilemma. Ideally one wants something unusual but not positively absurd (Anthony Powell achieves a good balance in Nick Jenkins's recitation of his school list in A Dance To The Music Of Time: "Feth-place-Jones..."). But the pitfalls are glaring. As Evelyn Waugh once noted, missing in his diary over the extraordinary patronyms in that morning's Times birth announcements, any novelist who made up a name like Fitty would be denounced for rank implausibility. The great age of bizarre

names in fiction is long gone, of course, and Hawser Trunnon, Smollett's retired commodore, and Meredith's elegant baronet Sir Willoughby Pattera have few descendants. The highpoint seems to have been reached in about 1860 — dominated, inevitably, by Dickens (the Venet, Sir Timley Snuffin, Jags, Sir Barnet Skittles, Mr Prumbechhook, hundreds more), and with strong performances by Thackeray (Yellowplush the garrulous valet, predatory Captain Rook) and Trollope (Senator Gotobed, Lord Earlybird). As the Trollope example demonstrates, the Victorians could sometimes over-egg the pudding when it came to investing a

character's name with his chief moral or occupational characteristics. Attempts in 19th-century novels tend to be called Slow & Bideawhils and doctors Slasher or Filgrave. The moneylender in Trollope's The Three Clerks is a certain Jabez M'Ruin and the lawyer who tries to keep tabs on slippery Lizzie Eustace in The Eustace Diamonds is Mr Camperdown (ie Clamperdown).

THE most resonant and apposite names in Victorian fiction — Dickens's swindler Merdle or Trollope's irresolute Irish peer Lord Fawn — have a habit of creeping up on you unawares. Periodically, 20th-century novelists have aspired to these dizzying heights. JE Priestley's Angel Pavement, which features a desiccated accountant called Smeeth and a typist named Poppy Sellers, was a fair attempt, along with Evelyn Waugh's Sir Alastair Digby Vane-Trumplington and Powell's Sir Horrocks Rusby QC. More recently the flag has been kept aloft by Iris Murdoch, whose books come sprinkled with characters called Tuan and Marzillian. If the heroine of the Eurostar Express has a fictional niche, it's probably in one of David Lodge's international academic romps along with Maurice and Desirée Zapp, but you can imagine the sniffs of critical disbelief that would greet her appearance in a modern novel. Flesh and blood she may be, but Ms Crumpacker belongs back there in the Victorian golden age, along with the Reverend Quiverful, Captain Glanders and the Honourable Mr Denecese.

LEFT TO DIE
"Cristina is six but has the body of a baby. Other little girls have the wrinkled faces of old women. Their matchstick limbs are covered in open sores."

Help End The Suffering of Moldova's Forgotten Orphanage Children

At Hincest Orphanage fifty, starving children lie in rows waiting to die. Nearly 25% died last winter. Around 10,000 children are in institutions. They eat slops and sleep under threadbare blankets. They have no hot water, no heating, no medicine and up to now no hope. The European Children's Trust, sister charity of The Romanian Orphanage Trust, is working flat-out to get help through to the orphanages, starting with Hincest. Your gift today will save lives and bring hope. £25 could buy emergency food supplements for two children to stop them dying from starvation. £50 could buy a medicine box containing antibiotics, analgesics, vitamins, pain killers and first-aid drugs to help treat five children. £250 could buy heaters, blankets, food supplements, soap and a medical pack to help save eight children. Call 01273 299233 or cut the coupon now. I will give £... (Cheque to The European Children's Trust) to save the lives of orphanage children in Moldova. £250 becomes £110 through the Government's Gift Aid Scheme, meaning we can help more children at no extra cost to you. Mr/Ms/Miss: Address: Postcode: Tel No: I will give by Access/Visa/CAF Card. Signature: Date: Returns to: Tony Barron, HOLDOVA APPEAL (G1), The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST, 21 Garlick Hill, London EC4A 3AR. Registered Charity No 104977. Please act now - winter is coming.



Vassall... a name synonymous with homosexuality and treason

John Vassall

Fall guy in a spy trap

JOHN VASSALL, who has died at the age of 72, gave his name to a spy scandal which caused serious embarrassment to the security services and to the Macmillan government. A prelude to the Profumo affair, it contributed to a growing impression of establishment incompetence and complacency which led in 1964 to the end of 13 years of Tory rule.

To many, his name also became synonymous with homosexuality and made homosexuality synonymous with treason, before the liberating 1960s took hold.

Vassall, the victim of a classic KGB entrapment when he was attached as an Admiralty clerk to the British embassy in Moscow, was vain, humourless, self-regarding and naive — a "perfect fall guy", as he was later to admit.

He was a lonely product of a respectable background. His father was chaplain of St Bartholomew's Hospital in London, where his mother was a nurse and where he was born. Devotion to his mother led him to become a Catholic — he was later confirmed by Brian Esman, then Archbishop of Westminster, in Wormwood Scrubs. He was educated at Littlehampton, where, so he said, he had his first homosexual experience at the age of 12. He went on to Monmouth School, where he engaged in further homosexual activities with older boys.

He joined the RAF in the second world war and was employed as a photographer. He then joined the Admiralty as a clerk, a career move which was to give him a permanent footnote in history. He was posted to the Moscow embassy in 1953, at the age of 28. He shared a flat with a fellow homosexual and soon met a Russian, who, he explained later, "obviously found me attractive".

He was a blatantly obvious target. One night after dinner, a Russian friend took him to a flat where he was photographed with three other men in a bed. Shortly after, in March 1954, he met a Russian KGB officer, an agent provocateur, and promptly went to bed with him. A group of KGB officers broke into the room, presented him with photographs, and threatened to publish them unless he agreed to "help".

He described in his 1975 autobiography how at the appointed time he was shown a box of photographs: "... after about three photographs, I could not stomach any more. They made me feel ill. There I was, caught by the camera, enjoying every sexual activity... having oral, anal or a complicated array of sexual activities with a number of different men."

He began to supply a steady stream of documents to his new controllers. Before his return to Britain in 1957, Vassall was given a Minox camera designed to fit inside a cigarette packet. Nikolai Borisovich Rodin, a KGB resident in London who also ran the double agent George Blake, was appointed to control him.

Vassall and "Gregory", Rodin's code-name, met every Monday, having arranged their first meeting at Finchley Road underground station. The increasingly solitary Vassall later described Gregory as a man who "understood and had respect for my feelings". His Russian contacts, he added, "were sophisticated and did not make me feel embarrassed". He even tried to protect his KGB controller during his interrogation following his arrest.

For five years, he supplied the Russians with classified naval documents, including some relating to NATO policy and new weapons systems. Worried about the Portland spy ring affair, which led to

There I was, caught by the camera, enjoying every sexual activity... with a number of men'

the arrest of Henry Houghton in 1961, the Russians briefly laid off, though they were soon to resume contact.

The security services' blindness about his lifestyle — he lived in a flat in exclusive Dolphin Square close to Westminster, spending about £3,000 a year when he earned just £200 — was echoed by the CIA in recent scandals, notably the Aldrich Ames affair. Yet the net was closing around Vassall. Anatoli Goltis, the 1961 KGB defector to

the CIA, said that in Moscow he had seen classified Admiralty documents. The following year, another KGB officer, Yuri Nosenko, defected to the CIA and told them about "a homosexual who had served in the British naval attaché's office in Moscow".

Vassall was arrested in September 1952. He described the day in an extract from his autobiography included in the *Faber Book of Treachery*: "In spite of my premonitions, it was a complete surprise when, as I left the north-west door of the Admiralty in the Mall and went to cross the road, two men in mackintoshes came forward. They were dressed in a car waiting by the status of Captain Cook... For hours I poured out what had been bottled up in my mind for years... As dawn approached I signed the document that had been prepared and lay back with my head resting on the large green leather armchair, feeling that I had at last got all this out of my system."

Vassall was jailed for 18 years and released on parole in 1972. He said in his autobiography, written in a Catholic monastery, that the naval attaché in Moscow had warned him he was moving in circles "too high" for him, a remark he found "brilliant and human". The British ambassador, Sir William Hayter, was "cool and aloof". In the end he blamed the British security services. "The fact that an obvious homosexual (at least to some) should have

been appointed to Moscow and allowed to remain there is a severe indictment of our security services," he wrote. He asked why Fuchs, the atom spy, was jailed for 14 years, while he, "a pyromaniac of 18 years", was also jailed for 18 years. He also pointed to Anthony Blunt, the KGB agent who was knighted and confessed only after immunity from prosecution.

Unsubstantiated rumours surrounding the case forced Tom Galbraith, a junior minister in the Admiralty for whom Vassall worked after his return from Moscow, to resign. A tribunal of inquiry, under Lord Radcliffe, into the scandal concluded that Vassall's appointment to Moscow was a "decisive mistake" but said there was "nothing improper" in his relationship with Galbraith, who later was given a more senior post in the Macmillan government. Vassall changed his name to John Phillips, living quietly in St John's Wood, north-west London, working first as a researcher in the City, later for local archivists. He was once said to be wanted to be a butcher. He was befriended by Humphry Berkeley, a Tory MP who later switched to Labour, and a pioneering reformer of the law on homosexuality. In an interview at the time of the publication of his autobiography, he claimed that he slept with two Tory MPs, one since elevated to the Lords.

Richard Norton-Taylor
John Vassall, spy and civil servant; born September 20, 1924; died November 18, 1996

Penelope Jessel

Liberal women's fighter

PENELOPE JESSEL, who has died aged 78, was one of a generation of Liberals whose contribution to political life and thought was made outside Parliament.

Penelope was one of five children of the bookseller Sir Basil Blackwell. She attended Oxford's all-boys Dragon School — since it had a rule that a sister could join a brother already in the school. From there she went on to St Leonard's School and St Andrew's, and then read classics at Somerville College, Oxford. Said to be the most beautiful woman of her generation, she married one of the cleverest men, Robert Jessel, later defence correspondent of the Times. He died of leukaemia, leaving her with two young sons and her living in exile.

Penelope was briefly a member of West Oxfordshire district council and a tireless supporter of the Oxford Civic Society. She cared passionately that surroundings should raise, not depress, the spirits. In the last few years she helped to set up and run the John Stuart Mill Institute, a Liberal think-tank producing papers and sponsoring lectures in an effort to raise the standard of political debate. A couple of days before she died at home she was discussing future projects for the institute.

Penelope inspired deep affection and will be missed not only by her sons and their families but also by hundreds of friends and students. One former student returned from Spain to nurse her when she became ill.

She was made a DBE in 1987 for services to the Liberal Party. "There's nothing like a dame," sang her friends. There really wasn't.



Jessel... awkward charmer

Christina Baron
Dame Penelope Jessel, political activist, born January 2, 1920; died December 2, 1996

Babrak Karmal

Ruler with Soviet strings attached

BABRAK KARMAL, who has died of liver cancer in Moscow at the age of 67, was installed as Afghanistan's ruler when Soviet troops invaded the country in December 1979. He was removed no more gloriously in the autumn of 1988 when Mikhail Gorbachev reversed policy and decided that the invasion was no longer worth sustaining.

It was a turbulent seven years in which Babrak — as he was universally known — never could shake off his image as a Soviet puppet. By the standards of earlier shifts in Soviet policy towards the countries they controlled, his capture in further homosexual activities with older boys.

He joined the RAF in the second world war and was employed as a photographer. He then joined the Admiralty as a clerk, a career move which was to give him a permanent footnote in history. He was posted to the Moscow embassy in 1953, at the age of 28. He shared a flat with a fellow homosexual and soon met a Russian, who, he explained later, "obviously found me attractive".

He was a blatantly obvious target. One night after dinner, a Russian friend took him to a flat where he was photographed with three other men in a bed. Shortly after, in March 1954, he met a Russian KGB officer, an agent provocateur, and promptly went to bed with him. A group of KGB officers broke into the room, presented him with photographs, and threatened to publish them unless he agreed to "help".



Karmal... Afghanistan's 'puppet' leader (left) in the grip of Soviet President Brezhnev

As armed resistance mounted, helped by the Central Intelligence Agency, the Soviet politburo under Leonid Brezhnev finally decided to topple the radicals and occupy the country. A KGB group stormed Amin's headquarters and killed him, while Babrak was flown into Kabul on a Soviet aircraft.

In power he tried to project a softer image and for several weeks western reporters were able to stay in the country. But he could never shake off the circumstances of his arrival and most Afghans despised him. In 1985 power in the Kremlin shifted and long before Mikhail Gorbachev

thought of liberalising in eastern Europe it was clear that the new Soviet leadership did not wish to sustain an unpopular war in their most unruly satellite.

Babrak went along with the change reluctantly. In what turned out to be his last interview with a foreign newspaper, he told the Guardian in February 1988 that a Soviet withdrawal need not take more than a year and that Afghans would be able to run their own security. This was no doubt what the Russians had told him, though it became clear he did not believe it. When he tried to convince the Russians to delay the start

of the pull-out, they decided to remove him.

Summoned to Moscow in March 1988, as Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov's memoirs later revealed, he looked distraught when told the Russians wanted to go as soon as possible. He was told he would have to give up as party leader, though he could stay on as president as a face-saver. Officially it was announced that he had resigned because of ill-health, though in the Guardian interview a month earlier he denied Soviet-planted rumours that he was ailing.

Babrak did not agree to the terms of the Moscow bargain

and for several months in his post as president he continued to try to mobilise support within the PDPA against the Russians. Vladimir Kryuchkov, KGB deputy head, was sent to Kabul to tell him it was all over. Babrak told a Russian interviewer later how the conversation went.

Kryuchkov urged him to retire to the Soviet Union for medical treatment, but spiced the advice with the warning: "Comrade Karmal, you should be careful. Your enemies may kill you." The Afghan president replied: "Only my friends can kill me now."

That was the end of his political career, although he still had vague hopes of influencing events after the Russians eventually withdrew. He returned briefly to Afghanistan in 1991 but was not accepted by his successor, Mohammad Najibullah. He was lucky to have left the country before the Mujahedin took over in 1992.

Babrak was always more of an ideologue than Najibullah. He saw communism as a doctrine of international liberation and had little truck with the radicals or the nationalists around him. He was not as skillful as Najibullah in playing the ethnic card and keeping a balance between Afghanistan's different peoples. He was an archetypal product of the urban, educated middle-class of Kabul but only a minority was as secular and committed to communism as he was.

He had been in failing health for the past year and died on Sunday at the Kremlin hospital in Moscow. But word of his death did not become public until Russian news agencies reported it yesterday.

Jonathan Steele
Babrak Karmal, politician, born 1922; died December 1, 1996

Jackdaw



Unforgettable

THIS is how my memory works... Without warning or reason, I was in a room in Geylors Hotel in Madrid. It was winter, late 1937, at a... E. [Ernest Hemingway] suddenly appeared beside us wearing an ugly, shark smile, the first time I had seen it. He addressed Modesto as "Mi General", already offensive, the style in the old monarchist army. He suggested they hold in their teeth the opposite ends of his bandana handkerchief, now pulled from his pocket, and settle this matter by playing Russian roulette since they were now among

Russians, two revolvers, one bullet in each chamber. It was an amusing game, either two men died, or one, or neither. As a boor's joke it was outstanding. It managed a double insult to me as a piece of female property, to Modesto as a thief on the prowl. My heart's desire was to kick E. powerfully, but I do not know how to kick people. Modesto did not see it as a joke, boorish or otherwise. His eyes went cold. He said: "Vamos."

As they could hardly shoot each other among the lamps and tables and sofas, Modesto headed for the outer door. E. following. Supposedly they would pick up revolvers along the way. It was too idiotic and shaming, a fine example of E.'s gift for making scenes. Koltsov must have sensed a quarrel because he took Modesto's arm, talking fast with irritation. The words "kontoria", "absurd", flicked about. He led Modesto, still talking, to a far corner of the room. E. had spoiled to be so agreeable, so comfortable in a warm room, and with plenty of delicious food for

me. The motherly woman ushered us politely but firmly to our coats and through the entry passage into the hotel corridor. We were not invited again.

Martha Colburn writes about her unstructured memories in London Review of Books.

Own goal

IN YOUR enthusiasm to impress your woman with your sporting prowess, tell her what a brilliant footballer you are. So brilliant that you once played professionally. You were only a teenager, mind, but you had your moment of glory. Which was, naturally, big. Very big. So big it is the winning goal in the 1978 Cup Final. Here is where you cleverly blend fact and fiction. Firstly, make sure you stress you were the youngest-ever scorer in the Final: you were only 15 years and four months old... Secondly put across that this was the beginning and the end for you: you made only four more starts for Ipswich Town after being taken off with concussion in their 1-0 win over Arsenal. Hard

times forced you to sell your winner's medal, and now all you have is your one big memory.

Danger of discovery: 10 out of 10. Even though women know nothing about football, they will check up with her dad and he will say: "Is his name Roger Osborne?" You're rumbled.

Snake tales

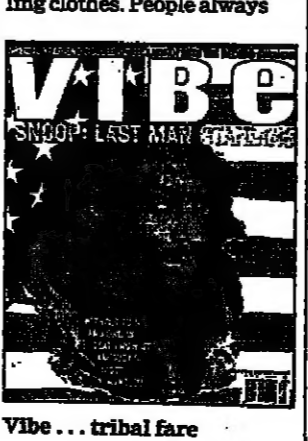
PSYCHOLOGY Today (PT): How old are these stories [in the biblical book of Genesis]? Stephen Mitchell (SM, biblical translator): Nobody really knows. They were composed by a number of different writers. Many are much older than the ones they were written down, because for centuries they were preserved orally. Some of them parallel stories from other cultures that appeared thousands of years earlier... PT: Some are very disturbing. SM: Even the greatest stories of Homer don't plumb the

same depths as the weird and dark stories of Genesis. Yet they're marvellous because they're like mirrors. Take the story of Adam and Eve and the serpent. When I read this story to a group of people, I can almost see flames coming out of women's ears when Eve eats the apple and Adam denounces her. It's really a very dangerous little story — like a Kafka parable — where men blame women for the all-miseries of humanity... PT: What's really going on? SM: The story is much more complex. The serpent is a symbol of wisdom in many cultures, because it sheds its skin and this is born again... So it's interesting that the antagonist in the story takes the form of a serpent and that the serpent tells the truth. Then you have a God who plants a forbidden tree right in the middle of the garden... and he says: "If you eat from this tree, you'll die." But that's a lie. Adam and Eve don't die. PT: So God is bullshitting. SM: He's not telling the truth... People have been trying to rationalise God's lies for thousands of years.

Psychology Today interviews religious scholar Stephen Mitchell.

Reservations

I REMEMBER Harmon's home-boys with their "straight-up" gangster identity, reservation boys allying themselves with Phoenix and Chicago and the Bronx. Paying tribute to the world, an admiring overture. Game colours as the perfect travelling clothes. People always



Vibe... tribal fare

complaining to Harmon, why don't you rap in Navajo? But it's almost 2000 and the Indian's wearing gang colors like the Invisible Man wore bandages — See me now? A question asked with hope, love and rage. Hey LA! Wussup Chicago!...

"Is this what Indians eat?" A white woman sitting at the Navajo Nation Inn holds up a wedge of fried bread and asks the waitress, Harmon, Pop-Tart and I are at the next table. "I'm Indian," Harmon mutters darkly. "And I'm eating a fucking burrito."

We fly, tires spinning, dark-eyed car, speakers slaming, Harmon at the wheel, Pop-Tart in the back seat. Once we almost hit a rabbit. It shoots into our headlights, my breath's a scream, the boys laugh. Rap blasts out of the speaker. "I'm not a thief! I'm the chief! One hundred per cent beef..." It could be blasting out of any car anywhere — Chicago, Phoenix, east LA. The country's old and strange but so the fuck what? The young Navajos speed over the land in a dark-eyed

Birthdays

Lord (Jack) Ashley, campaigner for the disabled, 74; Bill Ashton, founder-director, National Youth Jazz Orchestra, 60; Rt Rev Patrick Barry, Abbot of Ampleforth, 78; Dave Brubeck, jazz musician, 78; Air Marshal Sir John Curtis, 72; Gordon Durie, footballer, 31; Wendy Ellis, ballerina, 45; Gerry Francis, football manager, 45; Derek Hill, artist, 80; Maurice Hops, boxer, 45; Jonathan King, broadcaster, 53; Eileen Langley, photographer, 53; Helen Liddell, Labour MP, 48; Sir Richard Lloyd, chairman, Vickers, 68; Sir Nicholas Lyell MP, Attorney General, 58; Eric Newby, travel writer, 77; Prof Porter of Laddenham, OM, FRCS, chemist, 76; Keke Rosberg, motor-racing champion, 48; Alastair Ross Goobey, broadcaster, chief executive, Postel, 51; Prof Sir Bryan Thwaites, aeronautical engineer, 73; Charles Vance, actor, director and producer, 67; Cyril Washbrook, former cricketer, 82; Tony Woodcock, football coach, 40.

Death Notices

MARTIN, Miss, Artist, socialist, irishman, on November 26 after short illness, bravely borne, aged 85, beloved husband of Margaret, father of Esther, John and the late Don, brother of Delean, Conrad, Robert and Gordon, brother-in-law of Gary, Sally, Tracy, Caroline and Michael, friend of many, will be buried at Westwood, London, on December 10, 1996, at 11.30 am. Bright colours, flowers, donations, if desired, to Amnesty International.

Memorial Services

SCOTTISH John, a memorial gathering celebrating his work and achievements of the late John Gorman will be held on Sunday, 15th January 1997, at the Great Hall, University College School, Fogra, Hampshire. Those wishing to attend should arrive at 10.00 am. Tickets £5.00. Telephone 01256 3511 or telephone 01256 3511 888.

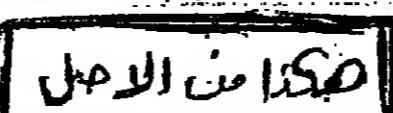
Birthdays

Abigail Mclennan is 18 today, Happy Birthday. Love from Mum, Dad, Hannah & Simon.
WTO place your announcement telephone 0171 713 4587, Fax 0171 713 4123.

car, scattering jackrabbits, speakers pulsing: "Bang bang to the brain. It's another native tongue." As cold as history, as tough and un-sentimental. Up ahead, a car's tilted off the road and a man in a wide-sleeve shirt waves his arms. No way Harmon and Pop-Tart are stoppin' for that. Somebody they know picked up a hitchhiker on these roads; he turned out to be a guy who everyone knew had been right for years. They shoot right past him, churning clouds — dust, the freeway and barrel on to the freeway living, breathing HUNGRY Indians. What do Indians eat? They eat fucking burritos. Current misconceptions of Native Americans as Neo-Nazi are corrected by Kathryn Dale's reporting from Arizona's tribal gang culture for Vibe mag.

You can E-mail us: we're jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4586; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Edited by Vanessa Harlowe



Pound in tailspin, page 12

Agents of woe at GUS, page 12

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
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Finance Guardian



Richard Giordano flanked at yesterday's christening by chief executive designate David Varney, of Centrica, and Ray Gardner, of BG plc

British Gas prize up for grabs in take-or-pay talks • Break-up into Centrica and BG plc by February

Morecambe Bay rush is on

Simon Hewitt
Industrial Editor

BRITISH Gas yesterday made clear that it was prepared to trade all or part of its prize UK production asset, the Morecambe Bay gas field, to rid itself of crippling take-or-pay contracts.

The signal was given as the company detailed plans to demerge its pipeline and trading businesses, and disclosed that it had made the first steps to sort out a legacy of uneconomic, long-term gas supply contracts. British Gas will pay £293 million to alter contracts with British Petroleum and with its own trading arm.

The Gas Consumers' Council demanded assurances that any benefits would be shared with customers. Sue Slipman, the director, said: "Consumers must be seen to benefit from the renegotiation or BG risks alienating large numbers of customers on the eve of the introduction of gas competition."

ploration and production arms will collect under the name BG plc. The City is expecting another two take-or-pay deals to be pushed through by February and sees Mobil as the next oil company likely to complete renegotiation. Many observers believe this could be a more significant deal than that with BP.

Directors made clear that the sale of stakes in Morecambe Bay was an option in subsequent negotiations, raising speculation that this route could be taken in talks with Shell.

BG chairman Richard Giordano said Morecambe Bay

needed to stay an undiluted part of British Gas for now but that there were already discussions about assets. British Gas is paying £393 million in the first take-or-pay settlement, to take less gas at more competitive rates. With BG keeping details of the deal secret, there was speculation that the amount payable to BP alone could be as much as £246 million. Some observers were suggesting that eventually the cash sum could be partly replaced by assets.

British Gas prepared the ground for the Centrica demerger last February when it announced the departure of its former chief executive, Cedric Brown.

It has been hinting for several months that the deal could be completed by next February, but yesterday made clear that enough legal groundwork had been done to meet the timetable. The chief executives of the new companies, David Varney at BG plc and Roy Gardner at Centrica, announced a series of non-executive directorships to their boards.

Among those joining Centrica are Patricia Mann, international vice president of J Walter Thompson and a former member of the Gas Consumers' Council, Heather Rabbatts, chief executive of the London Borough of Lambeth, and Bill Cockburn, head of WH Smith and former chief executive of the Post Office.

The former M15 chief, Dame Stella Rimington, joins the non-executive team at BG plc. Mr Giordano reversed a pledge to quit British Gas shortly after the demerger. He will be chairman of Centrica for up to a year and will remain as chairman of BG plc indefinitely. He said that he was determined to proceed with the demerger as quickly as possible to prepare for full competition in the domestic market after 1998. "There is no doubt that these business, unburdened by each other, will be managed more effectively than that."

What's in a name?

Chris Barrie on the costly art of the corporate makeover

"AT least it's not Centrica," said one City analyst contemplating British Gas's decision to reconstitute itself as Centrica and BG — and referring to retired chief executive Cedric Brown. "It should be Ec-centrica," said another observer. Changing names is easier than changing reputations. British Gas is following in the footsteps of Rover (BL, British Leyland), Seaford (Windscale) and United Utilities (North West and North West Water) to name just three examples. British Gas said its names reflected the new identities of the demerged companies. Developed by a consultancy called Interbrand, the image revamp cost £250,000. Centrica characterised a "dynamic company operating in a fast moving and



Notebook

The day sterling bear woke up



Edited by Mark Milner

WITHOUT any disrespect to its member MPs, Eddie George was no doubt hoping to reach a wider audience than the Treasury select committee in careful testimony relating to his view of UK interest rates. Not that the Bank of England governor was backing away from the prospect of dearer borrowing. As he told the committee, higher base rates will improve Britain's chance of hitting Chancellor Kenneth Clarke's inflation target of 2.5 per cent.

Mr George's remark clipped two pinnacles of the pound's value against the German mark and by the end of the day, sterling had fallen around four pence. It is now 13 pence below the four-year high clocked up earlier this week. The governor looks as if he is having to walk a rather tricky line. Sterling had been roaring ahead on expectations of higher rates. The governor would like to see rates higher too, albeit modestly so. In the present atmosphere, however, such a policy response would risk reinforcing market expectations, pushing the pound even higher.

That would scarcely help Britain's exports. They are already muddling about the impact of sterling's 16 per cent surge since the late summer on their earnings. Yesterday, it was the turn of Grand Met to join the pound protesters. Mr George seems to have squeezed out at least some of the base-rate anticipation from the market. As one trader said of the speculators, in characteristically robust terms: "They've been prodding the sterling bear with a stick, and it's finally woken up and taken their arm off."

The crucial judgement, however, will be deciding when the market has given up hope of an increase in base rates, because that will be the point at which Mr George will be able to push for one. Whether Mr Clarke will listen is another matter.

headline numbers suggests "excellent" is scarcely the most apposite description. The comparisons are horribly muddled by acquisitions such as Eastern Electricity, and the demerger process, which is breaking up the empire that was constructed by Hanson and his former partner, Lord White. What is clear is that the record £1.8 billion owed a great deal to profits on the disposal of the Cavenham forestry company and Surrurban Propane. Excluding those exceptional profits, Lord Hanson had to report a dip in after-tax profits below the £1 billion mark, and a slight fall in earnings per share.

Look, too, at "New Hanson", as the rump of the Hanson empire is tagged. Of its five "businesses", three saw profits fall last year. On a roughly comparable basis, its combined profits fell by £20 million, despite a 16 per cent increase in sales and — even more damningly in the eyes of the Hanson predators of old — capital employed.

New Hanson promises higher capital investment and diversification outside the US and UK. Lord White, who always reckoned a key indicator of a vulnerable company was capital spending in excess of depreciation, must be turning in his grave.

Clear and present

ACCORDING to Colette Bowe, the chief executive of the Personal Investment Authority, her organisation is not a self-regulatory organisation but, like it or not — and Ms Bowe does not like it — it is stuck with the label. The idea that supervision of the market in retail financial services is carried out by a self-regulatory body is, she says, a fiction which should be dismissed.

Does the label matter? Ms Bowe thinks it does. She believes there is a need to strengthen the perceived public accountability of the regulator in the retail area of the industry by strengthening the links with government and Parliament. She would like to see a designated agency with a public-interest board appointed by the government of the day. A couple of points. Ms Bowe says she is speaking only about regulation to protect the private investor. She is clear that practitioner investment — a key part of self-regulation — should remain, though on what seems to be the basis of technical advice, not supervisory control. That is fair enough. But implicit in the downgrading of the practitioner role is a shift towards a rule-based rather than a judgement-based regulatory system.

It is one thing for non-practitioners, with the support of expert advice, to enforce a set of rules. It is quite another to expect them to make judgements which would have taxed Solomon. That may be no bad thing. A judgement-based system may be more flexible, but a regime based on a public-interest organisation operating a clear set of rules should be more transparent.

Ofwat applies plunger as water complaints gush

Celia Weston
Industrial Correspondent

WATER companies came under attack again yesterday after the industry regulator, Ofwat, said that all companies had improved their services, leading to a slower overall improvement than in previous years.

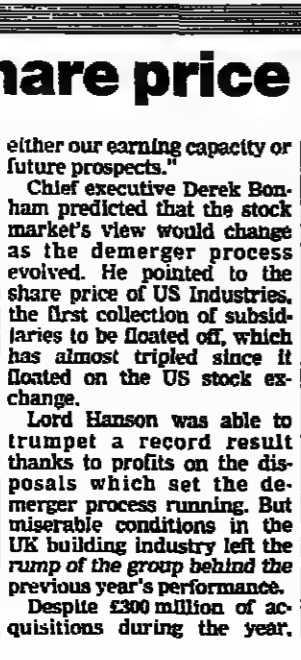
The dry summer of 1995 and the freeze at the beginning of this year had affected performance, leading to more interruptions to supply and a rise in customer complaints, he said. Companies whose performance levels are "significantly below" the average are to hold talks with Mr Byatt about their plans to improve.

The Ofwat report shows that the number of people writing with complaints increased last year by almost 10 per cent, from 156,000 in 1994-95 to 171,000 in 1995-96. There was also a doubling to 130,206 in the number of unplanned and prolonged interruptions of water supply for 12 hours or more, and a more than doubling of the number of customers without a supply for 24 hours or more. But Ofwat did report some improvements, including the quality of drinking water with 99.5 per cent of water tested meeting the required standard, compared with 98.7 per cent in 1992. Responses to bill queries, too, showed that 90 per cent were answered within five days and written complaints within 10 days.

Customers are entitled to guaranteed standards of service laid down by the Government. If a company fails to meet any of the guaranteed standards, customers are entitled to a compensation payment, normally £10. But Labour's Helen Jackson said the report was shocking. "The privatised companies and their regulators are failing the public year on year. Ofwat's own figures show that last year more than six out of 10 people (61 per cent) were not satisfied with the regulator's handling of customer complaints."

Nor were the water companies going to meet targets to cut leakage from the system, through which a third of all the water was lost, she said. Labour also published previously unpublished figures from the drinking water inspectorate of 81 cases of serious pollution since the beginning of the year.

Water complaints written complaints to water companies



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New Hanson spun

LORD Hanson, in his valiant announcement yesterday of his group's year-end figures, spoke glowingly of "excellent, record results". Well, up to a point, Lord Hanson. It is true the £1.8 billion pre-tax profit was higher than ever before, but a brief glimpse behind the

Water complaints written complaints to water companies

Hanson share price 'too low'

Roger Cowe

LORD Hanson, who rode the 1980s stock market boom to create his huge conglomerate, yesterday hit out at the market's valuation of the group as it splits up. Presenting his last set of results as chairman before demerger and his own retirement at the next annual meeting, Lord Hanson said: "The performance of the share price is of overriding importance to all shareholders and has been very disappointing. The combined value of Hanson and the demerged companies was 199p on December 1 1995, and now stands at 150p. "This in no way represents

either our earning capacity or future prospects. Chief executive Derek Bonham predicted that the stock market's view would change as the demerger process evolved. He pointed to the share price of US industries, the first collection of subsidiaries to be floated off, which has almost tripled since it floated on the US stock exchange.

Lord Hanson was able to trumpet a record result thanks to profits on the disposal of the Cavenham forestry merger process running. But miserable conditions in the UK building industry left the rump of the group behind the previous year's performance. Despite £300 million of acquisitions during the year,

profits of "New Hanson", at £231 million, were 3 per cent lower than last year. ARC suffered from the worst aggregate market for 20 years and saw profits fall by almost a fifth. Hanson Brick was hit even harder, seeing profits fall from £38 million to £27 million after the addition of £9 million from the French acquisition, Desimpel. Of the UK businesses, only Hanson electrical managed to hold profits steady.

The US companies fared better. The crane operation, Grove Worldwide, pushed up profit by half to £48 million, with the aid of acquisitions and strong markets. And the US aggregates company, Cornerstone, also had a good year.

Financial services needs overhaul

Richard Miles

A SWEEPING overhaul of regulation in the financial services industry is urgently needed to restore confidence among private investors, a senior financial regulator admitted yesterday. Colette Bowe, chief executive of the Personal Investment Authority, told delegates at an insurance conference that self-regulation no longer delivered the level of protection expected by investors. Instead, Ms Bowe advocated the creation of a designated agency that would be accountable to Parliament. This would replace the PIA, the self-regulatory organisation formed two years ago to police the sellers of life insurance, pensions and investment funds. Speaking to executives in an industry beset in recent years by scandals, Ms Bowe said the investing public was "no longer satisfied" with the current system of self-regulation, which was in fact "more apparent than real". "Self-regulation is a concept that, frankly, we are stuck with, because it is enshrined in a piece of legislation. The idea that the regulation of the retail marketplace is carried out by a self-regulatory body is fiction," she said. The designated agency — a notion also favoured by the Labour Party — would be controlled by a board peopled

entirely by public-interest directors. A series of committees would allow industry practitioners to make their views known to the regulator. Creation of the agency would also remove insurance companies' right to choose their regulator. Prudential, the largest life insurer in Britain, has refused to join the PIA, preferring to be policed by the chief regulator, the Securities and Investments Board. Consumer confidence in the financial services industry has been badly dented by a series of scandals, such as the mis-selling of personal pensions to hundreds of thousands of investors, including miners, nurses and teachers.

Pacific island two walk free

Dan Atkinson

SCOTLAND Yard yesterday freed two people arrested in connection with a \$100 million (£62.5 million) attempt to bankrupt the Pacific state of Vanuatu. The Guardian understands the Crown would have had difficulties mounting a prosecution here. The man, aged 47, and woman, aged 41 — arrested in July — surrendered to police bail yesterday at Fraud Squad headquarters in central London. They were told no further action was planned. As far as we are concerned, our involvement... is at an end," said a Yard spokesman. Britain last week returned the 10 "promissory notes" to

Vanuatu, removing the threat of bankruptcy from the tiny state. Had they ever been traded on international markets, they would have crippled Vanuatu; valued at £25 million, they represented five times the country's annual overseas earnings. Vanuatu ombudsman, Marie-Noelle Farrier-Patterson, said the country can "breathe... [a] huge sigh of relief". Meanwhile, the trial of the alleged prime mover behind the promissory-note fraud — Australian financial consultant Peter Swanson — opens in Vanuatu on December 10. "The Guardian understands that Mr Swanson may have been a front man for American masterminding of the scheme."

Table with columns for country, bank, and rate. Includes Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, USA.

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George's words put pound in tailspin

Larry Elliott, Economics Editor, and Sarah Ryle

THE Bank of England Governor, Eddie George, sent the pound into a tailspin yesterday after telling MPs he saw no need for a dramatic increase in interest rates to combat inflation.

that base rates were on the point of being raised from 6 per cent. fall by almost five pence against the German mark yesterday, closing at just over DM2.51.

Industry yesterday argued that their latest snapshot of the sector suggested no need to raise the cost of borrowing.

Admitted that the recent rise in the pound had caused problems for exporters, Mr George said that the Bank was aiming for a culture change so businesses and individuals believed that the low inflation environment would not change.

Sterling takes GrandMet toll

Lisa Buckingham

GRAND Metropolitan, the food and drinks group which owns Burger King, Green Giant and Gibby's Gin, yesterday predicted that this year's profits could be hit by £40 million if sterling remained at current levels.

but is hedged on either side of that band. The impact of the stronger pound could keep GrandMet out of the £1 billion-a-year profits league in 1997.

for National Statistics said: "This is one of the big issues when we discuss harmonising consumer prices across the EU. We are very proud of our system and we want to continue with it, but countries like Germany want us to come down to their level, which we are refusing to do."

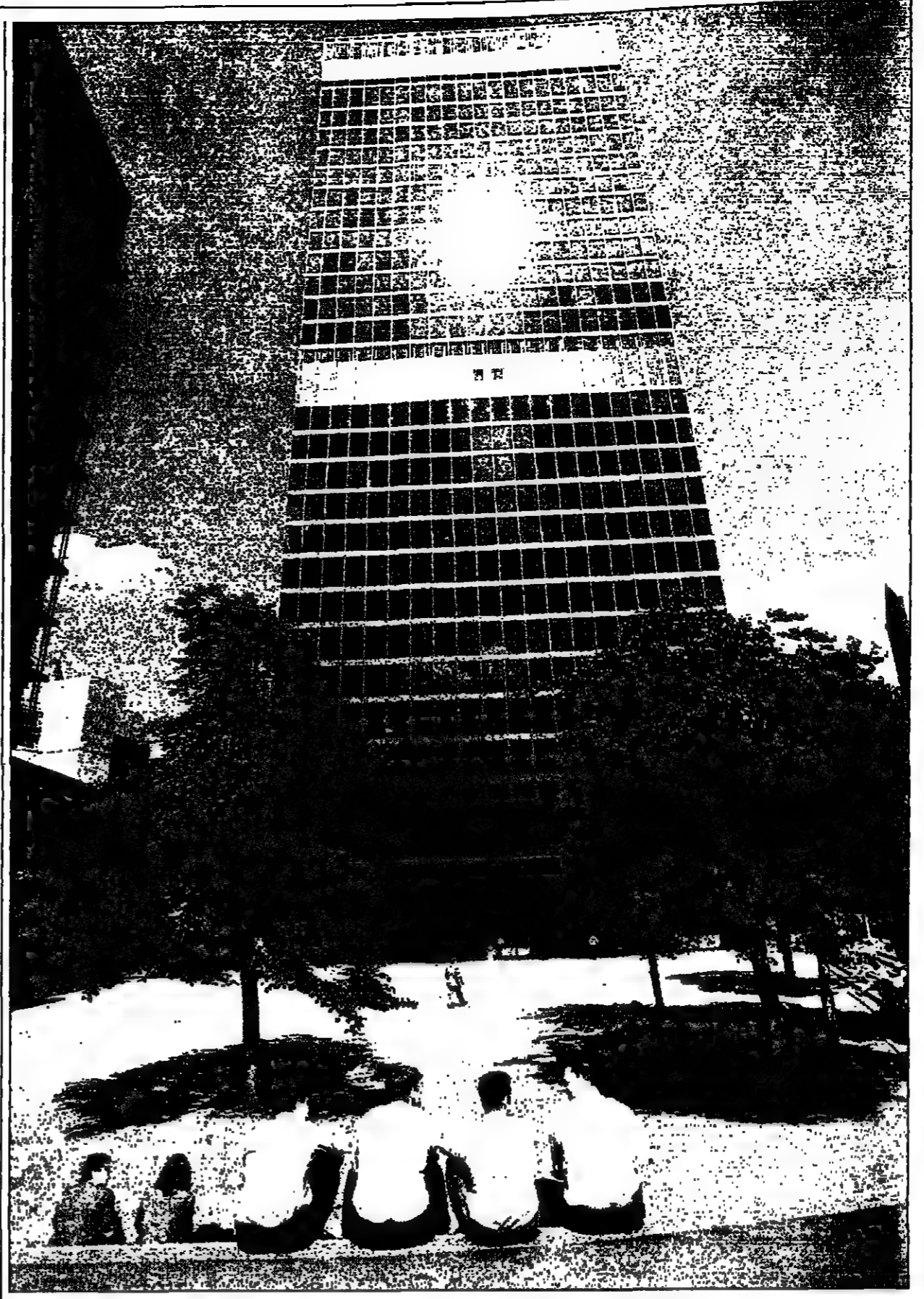
A spokeswoman for the ONS said statisticians will introduce personal computers to the basket of goods, on an experimental basis, in January.

UK fights to keep inflation measure

Sarah Ryle

FEARS that the UK's official measure of inflation could be forcibly watered down by other European Union countries emerged yesterday after criticism about American proposals to slash the country's consumer price index at a stroke.

EU officials are already running out of time to reach agreement on a pan-Community measure of inflation. This must be done by the end of this month so that inflation rates can be accurately compared in 1997 to determine which countries can join the proposed monetary union.



Tower of strength... Commercial Union, in the Square Mile, is the UK's largest composite insurer PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

When a merger means that the market's machismo is assured

Bid fever is running high in the insurance business, say Pauline Springett and Paul Murphy. But who really profits?

BID fever ran unabated among the UK's big insurers yesterday, sending share prices soaring in this usually dozy sector.

by a few super-insurers, such as Nippon Life of Japan, AIG, Chubb and Prudential of the US, Allianz of Germany and Generali of Italy.

about whether the cost savings boasted by merging insurers actually materialise.

German unions get tough on jobs

Ian Trayner reports from Bonn on growing discontent among German workers over economic austerity

GERMANY'S trade union movement attacked the government's approach to the single European currency as unemployment yesterday soared over four million.

deputy union chief said the austerity drives and spending cuts being enacted in Germany and across Europe in the race to make the grade for the single currency meant that jobs were being sacrificed on the altar of monetary unity.

certain to worsen in the months ahead as the winter brings layoffs in construction.

Ms Engelen-Kafer said: "We need EMU. But it depends how it is shaped. The cost-cutting should not mean that you take money out of the pockets of the little man. There is the risk of huge strikes."

Agents blamed for sales woes

Roger Cowe

WHEN Lord (David) Wolfson took over from Lord (Leonard) Wolfson, as only the third person to run the mail order empire of Great Universal Stores, there was a whiff of change in the air but only a faint one: it seemed a fair bet that much would continue as before.

ally in poorer income groups, so they don't spend enough but also, they no longer recruit family and friends as customers. Now, most so-called agents only buy for themselves and possibly their immediate family.

day that GUS was keen to get into direct mail and would possibly do so through acquisitions, as well as expanding its small Marshall Ward Direct operation. The trouble is, he has been beaten to Racing Green and Innovations by Burton, and the only other business clearly available is Freeman's, the mail-order operation now owned by Sears, which is looking for £500 million for it.

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News in brief

Ex-Brent man found guilty

SENTENCE is expected today on Donald Anderson, the former Brent Walker executive found guilty yesterday of masterminding a cover-up to hide years of phoney profits at the leisure group.

Barings 'star' loses out

MARY WALZ, the banker who claimed £500,000 after she was sacked by the collapsed merchant bank Barings, has lost her legal battle for the bonus.

Jobs boost for Wales

SONY was last night believed to be finalising a major inward investment agreement that could lead to hundreds of new jobs in South Wales, writes Geoffrey Gibbs.

Mercury makes the switch

THE Mercury telephone company has struck an agreement with BT enabling customers to keep their old telephone number when connecting directly to Mercury, writes Tony May.

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Agents are the industry's central problem and the agency system is falling apart. First, agents are gener-

lavery breaks back on Severn

صحنه من الراحل

Racing

Xavier breaks duck on Severn

Chris Hawkins

XAVIER ALZPURU who, believe it or not, talks with an authentic Gloucestershire burr, rode the first winner of his career when making all the running on Severn Gale in the Paley Street Handicap Hurdle at Windsor yesterday.

Alzpuru was brought up at Bourton On The Hill, where his father, a Basque, runs the Horse And Groom public house.

As a nine-year-old, Alzpuru went knocking on David Nicholson's door asking to help out in the yard during his school holidays and things progressed from there.

Now aged 21, he is attached to Robin Dickinson, whose gallops are used by John Allen, the trainer of Severn Gale.

Allen, based near Alcester, bought the mare out of a Stratford seller recently for 7,000 gns.

"As she is by Strong Gale I thought she was cheap, for whatever she does on a racecourse she'll be ideal to breed from," said Allen who, considering this was his first winner for four years, exhibited what some might regard as reckless confidence in regarding Severn Gale as a good thing.

"I knew she would win and had a good bet at 10's and 8-1," said Allen, who has only four horses.

Mick Channon was another to pull on his betting boots and got some of his Barbados holiday money when Dene-gold ran out a comfortable winner of the first division of the Social Novice Hurdle.

Dene-gold was badly handicapped and drew a blank last Flat season, but travelled well enough throughout this race to suggest he can score again in similar company.

Night City, trained by Lady Harries, opened favourite on the market and finished fourth. He was produced in the straight by Jamie Osborne, but ran around approaching his hurdles and looked very inexperienced.

Brendan Powell earned his money when conjuring a renewed effort from Flow to please favourite-backers in the Woodside Novice Chase.

This was a big price for an Akehurst winner at a "gar" track, but as the trainer pointed out: "all my horses have been a bit off with a lung infection."

Proton stayed a flat and a half wall on the Flat and his greater stamina saw off the gambled-on Desert Green, who appeared to be cantering two out.

Just about the easiest winner of the afternoon was Zer-dary, who took the four-runner Wraybury Handicap Chase hard held despite hitting the third-last very hard.

Zer-dary was the first leg of a training double for Kim Bailey, who immediately followed up with Act Of Par-dise, well ridden by Rupert Wakley, in the Dorsey Amateur Riders' Chase.

Batley reported Alderbrook none the worse for a fruitless Journey to Newcastle last Saturday when withdrawn on account of the ground.

"I'm very worried about the ground and unless we get some serious rain I can see him missing the Christmas Hurdle at Kempton," said Bailey, mindful of the fact that Alderbrook is still an entire and has to be looked after with a career as a stallion in mind.



Steam heat... Flow, winner of yesterday's Woodside Chase at Windsor, and her stablemate Ballyedward (foreground) get a post-race wash-down. PHOTO: FRANK BARNES

Flow lacks pace but not determination and she fought back to win by a length and a half.

Reg Akehurst's string has been out of sorts and Proton sprang something of a surprise when returned the 7-1

winner of the second division of the Spital Novice Hurdle.

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Hereford runners and riders with form guide

12.40 South Maiden 1.10 Star Of Italy 2.10 Heavy (oh)

2.10 Pool The Power 2.40 Storm 2.10 Rugged Situation 2.40 Sunday Ventures

2.10 222-SU ZATTONI (18) M Windsor 5-10-12 410 750-01 KNOX PRINCE (7) M York 9-9-7 414 1944-5 KENNEDY (16) W Walsby 5-10-7

Market Rasen

12.30 In A Moment 1.20 New Venus 1.20 Albion

2.00 Cool Weather 2.00 Outright Ambition 2.00 RUSTEN DRINK (new) 2.00 Peppy's Dream

12.30 1200-01 ZATTONI (18) M Windsor 5-10-12 410 750-01 KNOX PRINCE (7) M York 9-9-7 414 1944-5 KENNEDY (16) W Walsby 5-10-7

Exeter

12.30 Three Leader 1.20 October Star 1.20 Neptune III

2.00 Malloy Boy 2.00 Walsby

12.30 1200-01 ZATTONI (18) M Windsor 5-10-12 410 750-01 KNOX PRINCE (7) M York 9-9-7 414 1944-5 KENNEDY (16) W Walsby 5-10-7

Results

12.40 South Maiden 1.10 Star Of Italy 2.10 Heavy (oh)

2.10 Pool The Power 2.40 Storm 2.10 Rugged Situation 2.40 Sunday Ventures

2.10 222-SU ZATTONI (18) M Windsor 5-10-12 410 750-01 KNOX PRINCE (7) M York 9-9-7 414 1944-5 KENNEDY (16) W Walsby 5-10-7

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Sport in brief

Parke fights his way into semi-finals

SIMON PARKE, who has battled to recover from cancer, yesterday reached the semi-finals of a Super Series squash tournament, the Mahindra International, writes Richard Jago in Bombay. The former England No. 1 from Nottingham won 15-11, 15-17, 7-15, 15-7, 15-4 against the Pakistani Zuhair Jahan to reach the last four. Parke today plays Peter Nicol, the title-holder from Scotland, who came from a game and 14-15 down to outlast Egypt's Ahmed Barada 13-15, 17-15, 15-8, 15-8.

Lightweight post for Bowden

THE Amateur Rowing Association has appointed Sean Bowden as national coach to "produce two top lightweight boats for the Sydney Olympics", according to David Tanner, the international rowing manager, writes Christopher Dodd.

Pot Black back on screen

EIGHT former winners of Pot Black, the BBC 2 snooker series, will compete in a Seniors Pot Black, sponsored by Henderson Investors, at Goodwood House, Sussex, on January 11, writes Colin Baxter. It will be recorded by Trans World International for later BBC transmission.

Olympics may drop soccer

LENNART JOHANSSON, president of Uefa, said yesterday that soccer may be dropped from the Sydney Games in 2000, partly because of a perceived snub to the sport from the American organisers of this year's Olympics. No matches were played in Atlanta, the host city.

Schecker to race in England

TOBY SCHECKER, the 19-year-old son of the 1979 Formula One world champion Jody, will start racing in England next season at the wheel of a Vauxhall Junior single-seater in the series supporting the British touring car championship, writes Alan Henry. Schecter, whose father was the last driver to win the world championship in a Ferrari, finished third in this year's Formula Ford series in South Africa.

Kummu freed for final

IN AN about-turn of amazing proportions even for British ice hockey, the Superleague yesterday announced that Ayr's Ryan Kummu will play in tomorrow's B & H Cup final despite having already missed two games under a six-match ban imposed last week, writes Vic Butcher. He will serve the remainder of his suspension after the final, beginning with Ayr's home game on Sunday against Bracknell.

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Soccer

Spurs clinch Iversen deal for £2.6m

Stephen Bradford

LESS than 24 hours after playing a part in one of the European Cup's greatest upsets, the Rosenborg striker Steffen Iversen completed his move to Tottenham for £2.6 million.



Iversen... striking addition

It was the culmination of an eight-month surveillance operation by Gerry Francis. "We have spent a lot of time and done a lot of work to bring Steffen here. He will be in the squad against Coventry tomorrow and I'm hopeful this will be a turning point."

Iversen had planned to take a Caribbean holiday before starting his White Hart Lane career but, because of Spurs' injury crisis, the 6ft 2in Norwegian Under-21 player is being pressed straight into action.

He said he chose Spurs ahead of a queue of clubs because "my friend Espen Baardisen is already with the club as their reserve goalkeeper. I'm sure he will help me settle in but I don't see any real problems with that."

It was a day of double delight for Francis because the goalkeeper Ian Walker signed a new five-year contract with the club.

Birmingham's Trevor Francis has also been on Rosenborg's trail. He was at the San Siro and is thought to be interested in Harald Brautbak, who hit the first goal against Milan and made the second.

Nottingham Forest have dismissed speculation that Ian Woan is to be sold to Spurs for £3 million to enable the club to meet a reported New Year's Eve deadline to pay back £2 million of debts.

Neal's days look numbered as City approve £10m spend

THE writing would appear to be on the wall for the Manchester City caretaker manager Phil Neal, following yesterday's annual general meeting at the beleaguered First Division club.

At first the City chairman Francis Lee claimed he was anxious to avoid speculation about the post. "I can't comment on the position, otherwise I would be linked with 35 managers as I was last time and the position would be intolerable for the man looking after the team."

When questioned about the investment of new funds, however, he indicated that Neal's time was about to run out after one win in six

games. "We will say to the manager that comes along that there will be a fund of £10 million to spend on players," Lee said.

The 800 shareholders present were given details of a rights issue of around 13.5 million ordinary shares with which the club hope to raise money for new players.

Lee said he would re-assess his own position in the next 12 months. "I recognise the situation we're in. I get no pleasure from sitting there at Wolverhampton with 25,000 of their fans calling me a prat and neither do my wife or kids. There is not much pleasure in life for me at the moment."



A good night's work... United's scorers Eric Cantona and Ryan Giggs celebrate after Wednesday night's victory in a freezing Vienna

Reds in the black and with a spring in their step

David Lacey on the win in Vienna that gives Manchester United breathing space and the chance to buy a central striker

SUDDENLY the idea of Manchester United winning the European Cup, or at least reaching the final, is no longer confined to the field of dreams. The thought is prompted not so much by Wednesday's 2-0 victory over a spavined Rapid Vienna side in an igloo of an Ernst Happel Stadium as by its consequences.

By finishing runners-up in Group C of the qualifying competition United have not only become the first English side in 11 years to reach the last eight of the tournament but now find themselves in the more negotiable half of the quarter-final draw. The word "easier" does not apply here but it could have been worse.

If Alex Ferguson's team can get past Porto in March they will meet either Borussia Dortmund or Auxerre for a place in the final in Munich's Olympic Stadium on May 28. Neither can be remotely described as pushovers but thoughts of Ajax or Juventus, who are the other likely semi-finalists although Atletico Madrid are quite capable of exploiting further lapses by the Dutch side.

This was always going to be a more open competition than usual; so many of the big names from the past — Real Madrid, Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Paris St Germain, Benfica — were missing. Rosenborg's 2-1 win in the San Siro on Tuesday, which eliminated Milan and ensured that Arrigo Sacchi's return as coach went down like a sack of spuds, summed up the anarchic mood of the tournament so far.

Juventus, whose 2-0 defeat of Fiorentina assisted United's passage, now meet Rosenborg in the quarter-finals and must have thought that Christmas had come early

when they heard the news from up the autobahn. The European Cup holders are now even more strongly fancied to retain their title but the plot is far from over.

The old conventions no longer apply. This season's Champions League has produced 20 home victories and 21 away wins. United have managed to get through despite losing to Fenerbahce and Juventus at Old Trafford.

Porto will visit Old Trafford on March 6 before meeting United in the Estadio das Antas a fortnight later. If present patterns are maintained a draw in the first leg would not be a disaster for Ferguson. Nevertheless, making United odds-on to reach the semi-finals does betray an alarming ignorance among pundits about Porto's present strength and form.

The crucial point about Wednesday's victory in Vienna is that it has given United a three-month breathing space to concentrate their thoughts on the Premiership and Ferguson an opportunity to sign the central striker he needs. And after Wednesday

night finance is even less of a problem.

Having made £4.5 million from their group matches United now stand to profit by a further £2.5 million from the Porto tie. "It's up to the manager," said Martin Edwards, the club's chairman and chief executive, when the party returned home from Vienna in the early hours yesterday. "If he wants to strengthen the squad we are more than capable of supporting him."

Ferguson came home looking decidedly more chipper than he had done on United's arrival in Vienna. "Now we're through I feel we can improve," he said. "At times against Rapid we showed good penetration. Ryan Giggs is an important part of that, as he showed with his goal. It's very hard to handle him and his speed when he makes runs like that."

Giggs, like Keane, Beckham and, crucially, Cantona found the sort of form this level of competition consistently demands. So did Peter Schmeichel in what was arguably the most warming moment of a bitter evening. Schmeichel's early save in deflecting Rene Wagner's downward header off the goal-line with one hand inevitably drew comparisons with Gordon Banks's save from Pele during the 1970 World Cup, but there was one important difference.

As Schmeichel himself pointed out, "Gordon had to get across to the post while this one was straight down the middle." Nevertheless the quality of the Danish goalkeeper's save can be judged from the fact that observers even thought of putting it in the Banks category.

The down side of Manchester United's success is the likely loss of Keane until the New Year with a gashed shin, along with the knee and hamstring injuries which, according to Ferguson, will keep Brian and Gary Neville out of Sunday's match at West Ham. But by next March, if United are lucky, such set-backs will have been long forgotten.

Manchester Utd v Porto

THE last time these clubs met in Europe was in the 1977-78 Cup-winners' Cup when Porto won the opening game 4-0 and United all but tamed the ground back at Old Trafford, winning 5-2. Similar dramas are not impossible this time, although Schmeichel has surely suffered enough blood-letting for one season. Artur Oliveira will pose the main threat to English hopes and, to judge from Porto's Champions League results so far, they are as well organised defensively as they are up front.

Rosenborg v Juventus

ROSENBERG'S 2-1 win in Milan confirmed how unwise it was to underestimate the Norwegian champions and probably made Blackburn Rovers feel a little better after last season's experience in Trondheim. But another Nordic surprise at Italian expense would defy belief, especially now that Iversen has gone to Tottenham. Juventus will surely have too much talent — and too many options — for Nils Eggen's side but, with seven players on yellow cards, they will need to take care.

Ajax v Atletico Madrid

EVEN in a period of transition Ajax are still strongly fancied to reach a third successive final, as they did in the early Seventies. Davids, Reiziger and Finidi George have all gone and Kanu has a heart problem, but Overmars and Litmanen continue to give their football a lot of the old qualities and Kluyvert scored the winner against Grashopper on Wednesday. Rudi Antic, the Atletico coach, will continue to put his faith in hard work and discipline. Much rests with the mood and form of Caminero.

Borussia Dortmund v Auxerre

WELL beaten by Ajax in last season's quarter-finals, Dortmund now have Chupustat fully fit and in his old scoring form. With the additional experience of Möller, Riedle and Semmer, provided he is not suspended, they will expect to do better against Auxerre. Guy Roux's French football factory have qualified impressively after losing 1-0 at home to Ajax in their opening game but, with Blanc and Marini no longer around, they may lack a few wrinkles. Ties to be played on March 5 and 19.

Liverpool set up Ajax-style school

Mark Redding

IT WAS out with the old and in with the new on Merseyside yesterday as Liverpool announced an academy of youth and Everton said they were ready to quit Goodison Park.

The Liverpool scheme will take up 55 acres in Kirby and contain around 10 pitches plus accommodation. Work on what will be Britain's first football academy is due to start next spring and should be completed by the 1998-99 season.

Liverpool have been impressed by the example of

the Dutch champions Ajax and the French champions Auxerre who have built their success on formidable youth schemes. The red academy will be run by Liverpool's director of youth Steve Heighway.

"We are laying the foundations to take Liverpool into the 21st century," the Liverpool manager Roy Evans said. "The new centre will allow us to develop the best players from all over the world."

Everton struck a more sombre tone when their chairman Peter Johnson suggested the club could leave their Goodison home,

where they have been since they walked out of Anfield in 1892. They have their eye on land on the outskirts of the city next to the M57.

"I'm not at all happy about the facilities that we have got," Johnson said.

"Our problem is that we are very much landlocked and our capacity of 40,000 could well suffer if we made major changes."

Middlesbrough may already have a new stadium but they are still without their key players. Yesterday the club said they were prepared to write off the £4 million they paid for Emerson rather than allow

the heat-seeking midfielder to move to Spain.

"We've paid the fee, that's gone, but I'm not sure whether he can afford not to play football for four years," their chief executive Keith Lamb said.

"If he doesn't play for us he can sit on the beach in Brazil or on the quayside in Barcelona watching the ships sail by."

The Brazilian, 24, has been fined £100,000 for his continuing absences and is believed to be hoping for a move to Spain. He could, however, find himself without a wage and cast into limbo during his peak years.

New PC wanted for giant-killing

FA CUP: Trevor Haylett on the curious case of Sudbury's captain Nicky Smith who must put his Suffolk constabulary training to one side tomorrow to try to eliminate Brentford

THERE is nothing quite like the FA Cup for filling the head with thoughts of what might just be. And sure enough, as Sudbury Town look to send Brentford the way of hapless Brighton, their captain Nicky Smith confesses that his mind has been awfully all week — although in his case it has nothing to do with the giant-killing dreams abroad in this Suffolk market town some 20 miles west of Ipswich.

Indeed there have been times when he has had to stop and remind himself why virtual strangers are wishing him "all the best for Saturday".

It is easy to forget that for the would-be heroes of part-time football there is a day job requiring due care and attention, and for Smith this week has been all about his first steps in uniform as the newest member of the county constabulary.

"I suppose it wasn't the best time to begin a career such as this or to undertake a rigorous training course, but work has to continue and becoming a policeman is an ambition I have held for a long time," said Smith in a rare break between classroom studies at county police headquarters in Martlesham.

"There has been so much to take in that my head has not

stopped spinning with it all. But it has taken me some time to get this far and I'm determined not to mess things up. I've not really had time to think about the Brentford tie but that could work to my advantage."

His decision to leave the professional ranks at 26 and pursue a life outside the game is instructive for the disparity it reveals between those in the lower divisions and those on Premiership salaries. When, in 1994, Colchester released him on a free transfer, there was some hard thinking in the Smith household.

"I've got to go to Wycombe but what was on offer, bearing in mind where I would have to live, wouldn't have left me enough to repair the car. I talked things through with my wife and decided this was the way to go."

"I've had a number of jobs but I'm definitely a lot better off and every Saturday [playing] you come across other ex-pros who have done the same. Perhaps that explains why so many teams at this level are able to do well against the League clubs."

Confirmation of this comes from a glance at Richie Powlings' line-up for the second-round tie which will show, apart from the midfielder captain, five players who once wore Colchester colours and

who are also returning "home"; the authorities having ruled that the game be switched to Layer Road from Sudbury's Priory Stadium.

Smith found his way there first time round after launching his career at Southend



Smith... man in uniform

where his first manager was Bobby Moore. He recalls the calming, assured way the great man issued training-ground instructions. After England's World Cup-winning captain came Dave Webb, a chirpier cockney and the man who will occupy the visitors' dug-out tomorrow.

It was Smith's nerveless penalty after extra-time at the Goldstone which propelled Sudbury to these unprecedented heights and ruined Jimmy Case's hopes of avoiding the sack before Christmas.

"Tomorrow's task looks far stiffer against the Second Division leaders but the captain has every confidence in his team, who are currently well placed in the Dr Martens Premier Division, one of the three feeder leagues into the Conference. Certainly the force is with the underdogs."

"I've had one or two people from the training course saying they will be going to the game to cheer us on, added Smith. "It is a lovely club, with lovely people, and it would be marvellous to see our name in the hat for the third round among all those giants from the Premiership."

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Cricket

Tour match: Mashonaland v England XI

Nightmare in Mashonaland

David Hoppe in Harare

ENGLAND'S likely Test team succumbed to a humiliating seven-wicket, three-day defeat yesterday against a side containing only five full-time players...

the first four wickets went before 30.

Albion has made nine runs in three innings, his foot-past drive yesterday at a wide delivery from Gary Brent...

disaster. In that at least he is right.

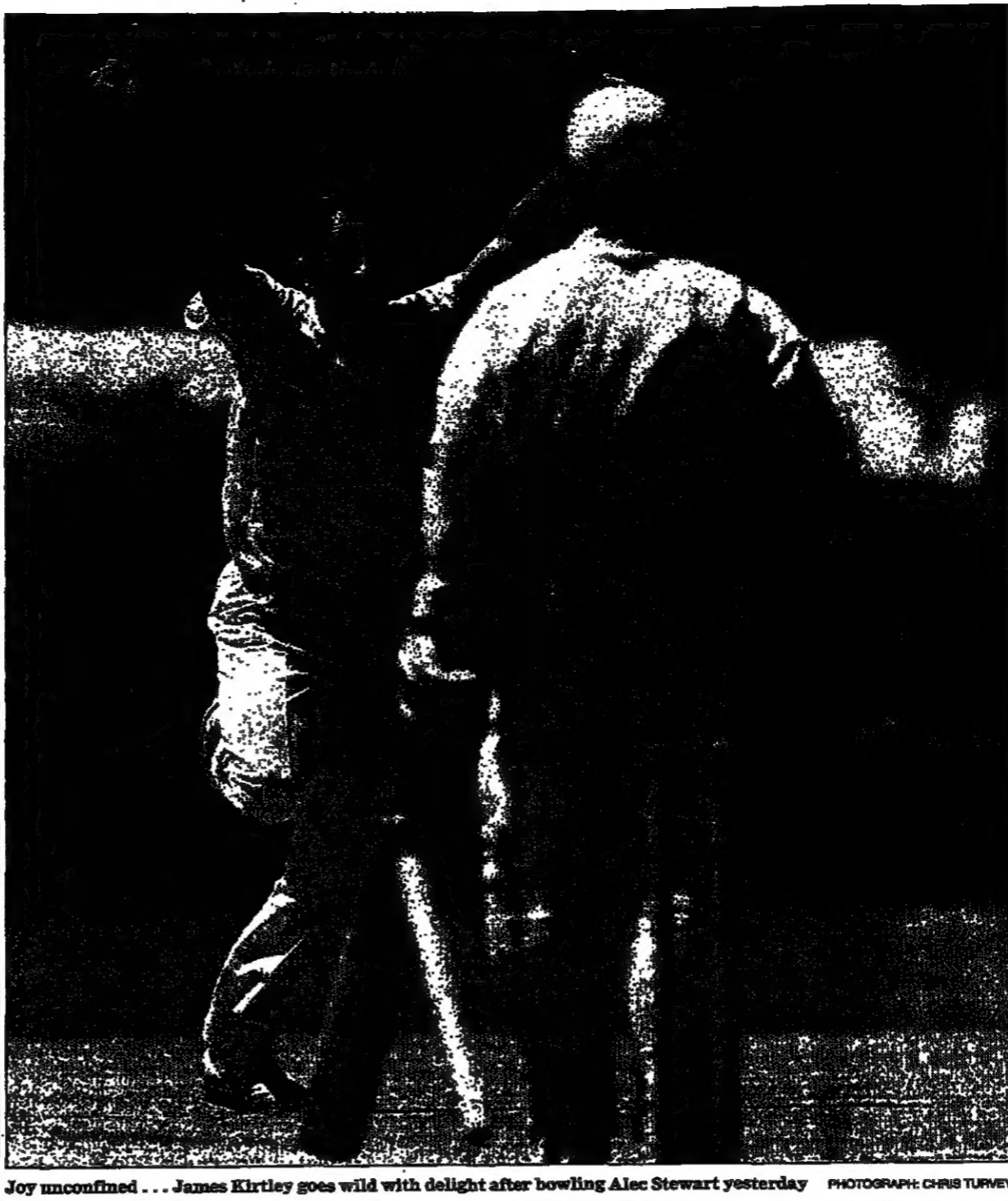
Too much can be made of England's limited practice. David Houghton had managed one innings in four weeks before this match...

Scoreboard

Table with columns for team, innings, runs, wickets, and players. Includes sections for Mashonaland 1st Innings and Mashonaland 2nd Innings.

England XI

Table with columns for player, runs, wickets, and dismissals. Lists players like A Atherton, M Atherton, and D Houghton.



Joy unconfined... James Kirtley goes wild with delight after bowling Alec Stewart yesterday

New South Wales v England A

... while the As keep rolling along

Andy Wilson in Sydney

DEAN HEADLEY and Ashley Giles have been the best bowlers on the England A tour...

England had apparently squandered a winning position in this first of two one-day games...

The Warwickshire player had struggled in his first wicket partnership of 40 dominated by Glen Chapple...

"I felt partly responsible for Adam's run-out," said Giles, who ended with 38 from 29 balls on his SCG debut...

Boxing

Boom time ahead for Hamed

Kevin Mitchell

NASEM HAMED thinks he is one or two fights away from fulfilling the boast that he is the biggest talent in boxing...

"Twenty-two years old and 24 and 01 Man, that's got to be great!" The unbeaten Yorkshireman bellowed in mock-American...

champion, would not be stilled. "Excellent record... but it's all got to end. As you know, my favourite round is round two...

ready on the American golden boy Oscar de la Hoya, who boxes with such distinction a stone above him at light-welter...

Rugby Union

Wasps to swap with Wigan

Ian Main

WASPS will next week unveil plans to swap their playing link with Wigan, rugby league's dominant club of the last decade...

that Wigan had been impressed by the England international Lawrence Dallaglio and Andy Gomarsall...

Will Carling will be transferred in midfield by Peter Meehan. The Lions lock Andy Reed returns to the Scotland squad...

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Table of sports results including Soccer, Rugby Union, Golf, Tennis, and Basketball. Lists various matches and scores.

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SportsGuardian

GRAND SLAM CUP



Smile on the face of the Tiger Tim... the British No. 1 happily produces a banker of a backhand on his way to a straight-sets victory over MaliVai Washington

Two steps from £1 million

Becker next as Henman doubles his money again

Stephan Bierley in Munich

ANOTHER day, another 431,250 dollars. Two wins within three days here at the Grand Slam Cup have amazingly doubled Tim Henman's earnings for the entire year. And he was supposed to be in Munich as a non-playing guest. Now, after yesterday's decisive 7-6, 6-3 quarter-final victory over MaliVai Washington, this year's beaten Wimbledon finalist, Britain's No. 1 clashes swords with Boris Becker, king of Bavaria, in tomorrow's semi-finals.

man could fly home with a million pounds in his pocket. "You can't get any better than to play Boris in his home town except perhaps in the Wimbledon final on Centre Court — and that is pretty much his home too," said Henman with a grin. He had previously met Washington only once, down by the Trent in Nottingham. Here the River Isar glinting under the winter sun recalled that English summer day when Henman's 6-3, 7-5 win blew up a gust of recognition which, for both men, increased to a mighty blast of public attention a few weeks later in SW19. Here in the Bavarian capital the prize was very much the money rather than the glory. It was something that was bound to enter both of their minds and did. "Obvi-

ously I was aware of it. I played for a lot of money today and I make no bones about that," said Henman. But tomorrow's five-set match against Becker will be a far truer sporting occasion. It is the first time they have met and Henman will be keyed up by far more than the cheque for close to \$500,000 (£300,000) which he will take even if he loses. This was arguably the best Henman has played indoors. Washington, ranked 26th in the world, nine above Henman, was regularly discouraged by the velocity and accuracy of the Henman serve. One ace at the beginning of the second set — one of 20 — fired past the American at more than 130mph. Washington, his brow glistening under the Olympiahalle lights, shook his head.

The first set had been extremely tight and always likely to go to the tie-break. Henman won that 7-3 to applause that could best be described as polite. His match was second on and, once Becker played, it was clear the majority had turned their attentions to the restaurants and bars on the perimeter of the arena. The clank of plates and occasional raucous laughter soon punctuated play in this so-called premier tournament. Not that this worried Henman one jot. Only once did he lose concentration and that was when he was 5-1 up in the second set. Washington broke him and his thoughts suddenly lurched back to the Wimbledon semi-final when the American clawed his way back from the abyss of defeat against Todd Martin. "Obviously, when you know a guy came back from 5-1 down at the semi at Wimbledon, it does cross your mind but I was serving well up to then and I thought if I play one more good game it shouldn't be a problem," Henman said. So it proved.

In the first of the day's two matches Switzerland's Jakob Hasek lost to Becker 6-4, 6-1. Hasek's first and only victory over Becker was in Basle in 1984 when the German was 16 years old. Even then the Prague-born Swiss, three years older than Becker, struggled to win. The next year Becker claimed his first Wimbledon title and Hasek has never managed to get close to beating him since. Here he was simply overwhelmed by Becker's weighty serve and a clutch of tremendous forehand and backhand returns. Hasek, like Henman, was a substitute for this tournament. Indeed he had previously announced his retirement last month, although he was hardly dragged out of it kicking and screaming. This defeat netted a cool \$262,500. Dressed in white, save for a small motif on his shirt and a couple of narrow flashes on his shoes, Hasek appeared a throwback to less garish days. It seemed time had truly slipped by him in the second set as Becker pounded in winning shots with compulsive

frequency. It might have frightened the life out of Henman if he had been watching. At 5-0 down Hasek picked up two rackets and played the German's first serve with the wrong hand. Becker, cocooned in concentration, did not even notice the crowd tittering. "I think at the moment I'm playing the best tennis of my life," said Becker, which was a clear enough warning to Henman. Becker's injury at Wimbledon allowed him several weeks of precious rest and he has clearly benefited hugely. Not that Henman admitted to being tired or jaded himself. "I think people thought I had played too much tennis but the way I served today was not somebody who is tired."

Eric hums to the music of a nun's chorus



Vincent Hanna

THINGS were a bit tense on Wednesday night. The family was consumed with foreboding. I tried a little joke: "John Major asked Alex Ferguson to lunch — to get to know someone who really wants to be in Europe." My wife stared frostily: "Your daughter Sinead says she's applied to be a Carmelite nun. What are you going to do about it?" "Pray," I replied, "that he plays well tonight." It is some months since I have written about Eric and his football team. My therapist assures me that I am over the worst now.

It is curious how much Cantona remains a talisman for Manchester United, even in these hard times. His uncertain and moody play is reflected in all the team does. He fails, they fail. The city is baffled and depressed. For three years he has dominated much of our lives. Cantona has imposed his image on films, TV adverts and billboards. We have been bemused by devils, raindrops, sardines, doggerel-verse and a "philosophy" which proves that anything sounds profound if said with a French accent.

We are fascinated and infuriated by a man whose heroes are the poet Rimbaud and the anarchist Ferré, whose grandmother fought the Falangists in Catalonia, who once called his national team manager a shit-bag and missed a day's training because his dog had died.

Cantona came to Vienna on Wednesday night with one goal in 13 games, out of touch and out of sorts, as much a puzzle in adversity as in glory. The Rapid game was vital, not just for Manchester United but for British football, which has made no impression in the European Cup for a decade. Cantona touched the ball 80 times during the match, 33 in the first half, 17 in the second. I rated eight of those contacts poor. In three cases he beat one man, tried to take on another and lost the ball. On 18 occasions his touch was positive and effective. But eight times I caught a glimpse of the old genius. Like

his left-footed cross from the right touchline to set up a simple, and muffed, chance for Solskjaer. That superb first goal with Giggs weaving a left/right diagonal; the controlled hold and turn by Cantona, drawing in Ivanov, before stroking the ball into the path of Giggs coming at a reverse angle. These were excellent professional touches — as was his header in the 68th minute which hit the post; and his slide beyond the defence to meet Beckham's perfect pass for the second goal.

But I felt that familiar tingle with one move after 39 minutes: Cantona on the right touchline at half-way, a mazy run across the field pulls defenders with him, an exchange with Keane who feeds Beckham on the right. Cantona sprints 40 yards, arriving at the far post to meet Beckham's long cross on the volley. I was mesmerised by the skill and vision but still wondered whether a year ago he might have turned it into the goal of the season.

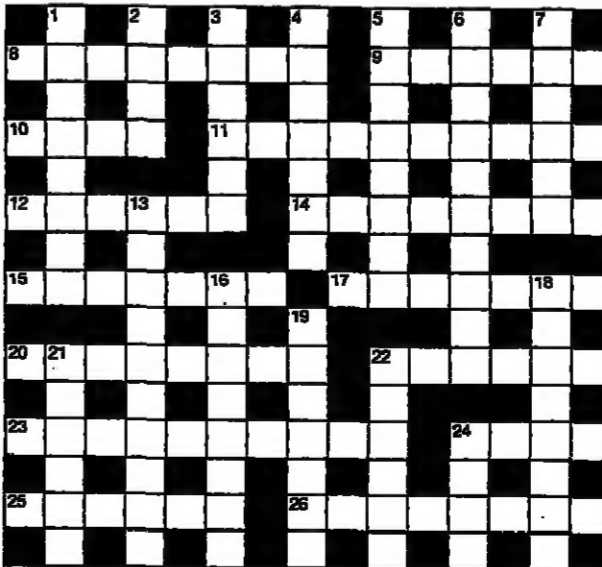
ERIC has lost confidence," said Alex Fynn, who helped write Cantona on Catalonia, published last month. "Things he did instinctively he now thinks about and they don't work so well." Cantona insecure? An oxymoron, I thought. But that is what people who know him say: that he is a man in the process of changing identity. He still smarts over his rejection by the French national team, both in Euro 96 and since.

"Eric wants recognition on the international stage, and being ignored is a massive blow to his self-esteem," a friend said. "He needs to be arrogant, to be secure in his identity and his power," said another. "He feels cheated of his chance for greatness."

Nor did the drubbing United took from Juventus in Turin, where Ferguson played him out of position, improve his mood. Cantona, I am told, is basically a happy man, has a devoted family and lives in a community that worships him. He knows that his future is secure at Old Trafford. He lacks neither money nor interesting things to do. But it is not enough for him, not for the rest of us either. Well, maybe on Wednesday night in Vienna that arrogant spark was rekindled. Perhaps, now, he will get one last chance for greatness. I hope so — because I think Sinead is serious about the convent.

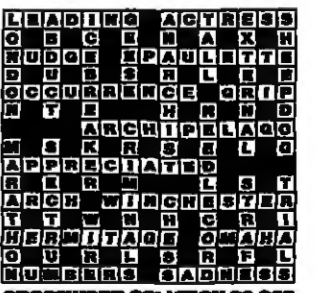
Guardian Crossword No 20,829

Set by Fidelio



- Across**
- 8 Lawyers have it, individual voice of the male (8)
 - 9 Solution's a Queen for New South Wales (6)
 - 10 Lower part of pin (4)
 - 11 Prodding the body causes pimples (5,5)
 - 12 Old cubic carat, a fancy silver alloy (6)
 - 14 One figures it's the ready follower (8)
 - 15 Do not start to outline when drawing a circle (7)
 - 17 Crossing exercises left one able (7)
 - 20 Keep Brummel initially to scale (6)
 - 22 Pretty artist and the king (6)
 - 23 Mainly deep mysteries (10)
 - 24 Powder the German statesman (4)

- Down**
- 1 What's left for a graduate with long arms (8)
 - 2 It turns up very loudly, causing a row (4)
 - 3 Fish's midnight entry to fifth (6)
 - 4 Ambassador runs on lines for colony (7)
 - 5 Pain for an ugly person (4-4)
 - 6 Palms do wave above first sacred singer (10)
 - 7 James, the outlaw, one hears is a coward (6)
 - 13 Angel's resting place? (3,7)
 - 16 Flora, these are wrong (8)
 - 18 Seth may first turn purple (8)
 - 19 Part of the church clear to the French (7)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,829

- 21 Nail polish is title in the Spanish (6)
- 22 Country's former state lacks a capital (6)
- 24 Kelvin's body put down (4)

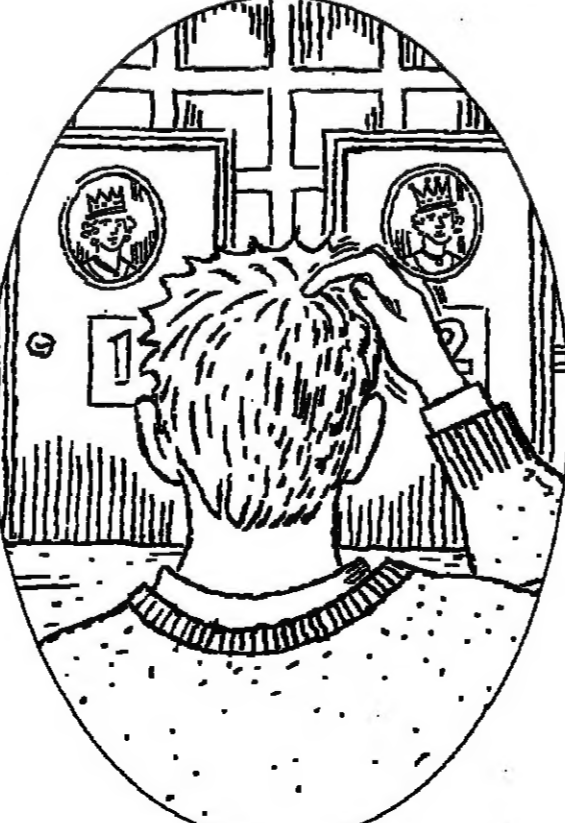
Solution tomorrow

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Ruddles County Riddles.

No. 13. Pub Challenge.

For Peter Barrowby it was a dream come true. He had won the 1996 Hertfordshire Pub Quiz Championship after six gruelling rounds. But his victory was by no means final. He had yet to claim the prize. He was placed in the bar of the Queen's Head Pub in Westcott. There were two doors, each leading to different rooms. Behind one of the doors, lay the prize, been instructed to lie, but Peter did not know which. Peter stepped forward, asked one of the men a question, and upon hearing his answer confidently strode through door 1 to claim his voucher. Peter is of course too busy to tell us how he worked out which door to choose. Do you know how he worked it out?



صكرا من الاميل